TROUBLED MASCULINITY: THE RAKE AND THE FOP IN THE ENGLISH COMEDY BETWEEN 1662 AND 1728

Thesis

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01: Introduction: Masculinity and comedy

In the ideologically charged times between the Restoration and the Hanoverian succession, portraying male characters, particularly male characters belonging to the aristocracy, was a difficult task for playwrights and fraught with political implications. In the traditional English comedy, established in the Renaissance just a few generations earlier, the protagonists belong to this ruling class. Karen Harvey (2005) summarises the studies relating to gender conducted on the period between 1650 and 1850 as positing "this period as the century of change in the ways in which bodies were understood, sexuality constructed, and sexual activity carried out" (Harvey 2005 900). These changes were intertwined with political discourses, in which playwrights took an active part. While comedies have always been regarded as lesser than tragedies and attracted less interest, an analysis of comedies in this period can shed light on the processes that fundamentally changed the understanding of aristocratic masculinity which in turn sheds light on fundamental changes within the structure of society.

Since the poststructuralist interest in power relations and the cultural turn in the field of history, scholars have discovered that the question of male power is not as simple as it once seemed. Ruth Karras argues in her monograph *From Boys To Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe*: "we cannot understand women's lives without understanding men as men (as opposed to men as the normative humans, the traditional focus of historical study)" (Karras 2003 19). As Karras notes, "the normative humans" which were the focus of historical study do not directly correspond with real people, and dismissing a focus on men and masculinity because they have always been the focus of historical studies negates the experience of men as men and the long history of debates and negotiations about masculinity. Masculinity was in a crisis at virtually every point in history but particularly so after the Restoration (see e.g. Kimmel 1986; Allen 2002; King 2004). Modern gender historians tend to depict ideal masculinity as a series of "step-changes": the "godly man" of Stuart England, superseded by the "polite man" of the early 18th century, followed by the "sentimental man" of the Hanoverian period. This harbours the danger of "the history of masculinity fast developing a periodisation which will force studies of manliness to ape the increasingly outmoded characterisations of more traditional political and social history" (Gregory 1999 86). This periodisation also hides the cracks between competing concepts of masculinity and within them and the issues men had in finding their place in the internal hierarchy of masculinity as well as the issues they faced while shaping their gender identity.

The gender identity of a aristocratic stage character was closely connected to its function in society. The role of the aristocratic man was constantly reassessed after the Restoration when the king, peers,

parliament and citizens struggled to re-establish their roles and relations. Tied in with these political, philosophical and ideological changes were the economic and social developments that were transforming the agrarian, feudal country into a capitalist, industrialised nation. The history of gender in the 18th century cannot be divorced from the rise of the middle class and the establishment of the gentry as the dominant class (King 2004 16). Aristocratic men lost economic power to middle-class men at the head of businesses rather than estates. At the same time, these aristocrats regained an extent of political power their ancestors had last enjoyed during the War of Roses (King 2004 16, see also chapter 2).

R.W. Connell's work on masculinities and particularly her combination of the concept of hegemony and masculinity is particularly useful to discuss the shifting representations of aristocratic masculinity. Hegemony, as defined by Connell (based on Antonio Gramsci's work) "refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" (Connell 2005 77). This is directly connected to concepts of masculinity as "[a]t any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 2005 77). The concept of hegemonic masculinity thus combines the three separate concepts of masculinity, patriarchy and class.

These concepts were also at the heart of the work of playwrights. After the Restoration, the question of cultural hegemony was hotly contested and Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity provides a tool to describe the ways in which the comedy often transformed and reduced questions of class and patriarchy to gender. Broadly speaking, the playwrights of the early Restoration portrayed men who exhibited aristocratic privilege and values favourably, while those types became more and more problematic towards the mid-18th century. This study concentrates on comedies written between 1662 (Robert Howard, *The Committee*) and 1728 (Colley Cibber, *The Provoked Husband*) and aims to demonstrate the role of the comedy in marginalising and re-forming aristocratic models of privileged masculinity by focusing on the figures of the rake and the fop. The importance of the figures of the rake and the fop in the discourses surrounding gender and particularly masculinity between the Restoration and the mid-18th century is closely interlinked with the fundamental ideological shifts at the time.

Most protagonists in the comedies of the period can be considered aristocratic. The tension between those with political power (the aristocracy) and those with economic power (mostly merchants from the middle class, citizens of London) can be felt in most comedies where courtship and

the securing of financial independence were intertwined and often urgent. The rakes and fops in the comedy were dependent not only on the monarch and on those in high positions at the court but also on the affluent middle class. They depended on the citizens' financial good will and fiercely resented them for it. These various dependencies clashed with the sense of absolute privilege and entitlement that many aristocrats had, portrayed in the comedy by the stock types of rake and fop that are at the centre of this study. The dependence of aristocratic men on men from a lower class upset the hegemonic relations between them; the aristocratic fop might belong to the class which had political and cultural hegemony, but the fop's claim of hegemony over middle class men exposed the flaws in the hierarchy. The fop and to some extent the rake were a danger to the class system because of their understanding of their masculinity.

Before diving into the analysis, the use of the term "aristocratic" needs further definition. The male characters analysed here are categorised as "aristocratic" rather than by a historically more neutral term like "elite" because it emphasises the basis for their high social status as rooted in feudalism, the monarchy and their birth right, which was part of their identity. The word "aristocratic" is problematic in the context of at least some characters, as English society was not categorised as neatly as, for example, French society into three distinct estates. The only clear distinction in England was that between the peerage and those who were not part of the peerage. Underneath the peers were the baronets and the knights, whose social status was higher than that of untitled men but whose titles carried no political power or privileges. In English society the term "gentry" for those below the peerage but not involved in trade was generally used but was never a legal term. At the top of this group were the gentlemen who owned land and did not have to work for their money, while those in the lower gentry were lawyers, attorneys or held other official positions (it is worth noting that those professional men were not always considered to be gentlemen and thus part of the gentry, see Earle 1989 5). They might have been the brothers or younger sons of those landowners (see chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion) or be unrelated to powerful families. For the purpose of this study, the peerage and the upper gentry are considered to form a category called "the aristocracy" whose image and identity was close to that of the aristocracy in countries such as France and Germany. There were usually family ties between the members of this group and it was members from this group that held the vast majority of political power. While anyone could stand for election into the House of Commons, candidates were mostly members of the gentry (or, occasionally, even the heirs of living peers). This use of the term aristocracy is useful for the analysis of masculinities within comedies but the fluidity of the boundaries is a frequent topic within the comedies and was considered by some an advantage for and by others a danger to the order of patriarchy. As this study focused on masculinity and particularly

on the masculinity of the rake and the fop as stock types in the comedy, this anxiety surrounding the boundaries of class will only be discussed where it touches upon the construction of masculinity.

The masculinity of the fop and the rake as figures on stage has been analysed in studies spanning the last 25 years (e.g. Senelick 1990; Chernaik 1995; Williams 1995; Carter 1997; Cohen 1999; Fletcher 1999, Foyster 1999b; Gollapudi 2011). By concentrating on the rake and the fop, it is possible to draw a larger picture of the criticism that the established contemporary modes of aristocratic masculinity were subjected to by demonstrating how the rake and the fop embody the danger those identities posed to a modern society. Male characters who based their identity on their aristocratic privileges and whose gender identity, like the rake and the fop, was closely linked to their class could be portrayed as lacking or in need of a reformation (re-formation); the reformation of a rake – the fop never reformed – always included a re-formation of gender identity.

The rake is the Restoration stock type that has drawn the most attention from critics, whom he has fascinated since the 19th century. When he stepped on stage in the early decades after the Restoration, the rake was a reflection of the courtiers of Charles II's court, which was renowned for its libertinism. The relationship between the rake on stage and the libertine at court at the beginning of the Restoration period is on the one hand obvious (it was for example generally agreed that Dorimant in George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) was influenced by John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester), while on the other hand the rakes were often a very simplified version of the more complex ideas of libertinism (see chapter 3). In its essence, libertinism celebrates aristocratic privilege freed from aristocratic duties. It might be said that libertinism is the shameless exploration of privilege, both masculine and aristocratic; one stage some playwrights reduced this to a rake being sexually licentious (see chapter 3 and 5).

The figure of the fop, the effeminate aristocratic fool, has received considerably less critical attention than the rake. At his core, he is the embodiment of effeminacy, one of the crucial concerns about masculinity at the time. Susan Staves's article "A Few Kind Words for the Fop" (1982) established the fop as a valid subject for scholarly attention, but it was not until 1995 that a study focused exclusively on the fop, namely Andrew P. Williams' *The Restoration Fop: Gender Boundaries and Comic Characterization in Later Seventeenth Century Drama*. Just like the rake-hero, the fop was typical of the Restoration comedy. While Renaissance playwrights mainly relied on the "mechanics" (lower class fools) for more burlesque humour, the Restoration playwrights favoured noble fools. A trend that obviously pleased not all. William Wycherley's fop Sparkish in *The Country Wife* (1675) refers contemptuously to this fashion:

> …. Their [the poets]
> predecessors were contented to make serving-men only

> their stage fools, but these rogues must have gentlemen,
> with a pox to 'em, nay knights. […]
> DORILANT: Blame 'em not; they must follow their copy, the
> age. (III.ii.128-136)

Although Dorilant's main motive in his retort is to ridicule Sparkish, the fop as an effeminate aristocratic fool reflected a real social phenomenon. "Foppery was […] not merely a theatrical convention; periodical essayists and pamphleteers had quite as much to say about it as playwrights. Some of the satire on foppery was provoked by general moral considerations like disapprobation of vanity" (Staves 1982 419). Michael Kimmel claims that early eighteenth-century representations of the fop symbolised a 'crisis of masculinity' that contemporary observers linked to a perceived increase in female independence (Kimmel 1986 93-102).

The fop was not merely ridiculous: he could take on a more sinister role, hinting at the disturbance his effeminacy caused to society, often in connection to political issues. The fear of effeminacy shaped the English comedy from the Restoration well into the middle of the eighteenth century, as playwrights offered solutions to contemporary conflicts by transforming masculinity and privileging the polite gentleman (see chapter 7). Other playwrights suggested that the situation was hopeless, as men were not made to negotiate the challenges of the modern age (see chapter 2). For playwrights who were writing comedies, effeminacy was of double use: firstly, as a transgression of cultural norms, it was a reliable way to provoke laughter, while, secondly, it could (subtly or less subtly) discredit behaviour the playwright considered problematic. Although playwrights did not agree on all aspects of ideal masculinity, a clear trend towards rationality and restraint is evident in virtually all comedies. The discussion of the fop in chapter 4 will not be limited to the emerging stock type of the fop who was focused on fashion but include other fools who exhibit only part of the later repertoire.

To some extent, the fop represented the effeminate flipside of the rake. Williams claims that "[w]hat separated the wits and the rakes from the foolish fop became increasingly blurred toward the end of the 17th-century as the changing cultural and dramatic environment of England grew dissatisfied with the libertinism that marked the early Restoration stage and accepted in its place a more contemplative and socially responsible comic theatre" (Williams 1995 165). The line between the rake and the fop was blurred from the outset. The fop's ridiculous display of himself, the self-conscious performance of his accomplishments, put him close to the libertine, also obsessed with the display of his actions and his wit.

The characters in comedies negotiated their position in their (generally aristocratic) social circle by establishing bonds of friendship as well as of marriage. They negotiated their position towards their family, their lovers/spouses, their friends and members of other classes by various means. The rake

and the fop often resorted to intrigues, cuckolding, duelling and other forms of violence, thus disrupting social boundaries. The comedy, with its traditional plots of love and marriage, was better suited to problematise the behaviour of those stereotypical privileged characters than the moralistic, serious pamphlets and sermons of zealous proponents of the Reformation of Manners, a movement in the late 17th and early 18th centuries which aimed to improve male manners (see chapter 2). The present study aims to uncover the renegotiation of masculinity, and particularly of internal hegemony, by tracing the development of the rake and the fop on stage, with a particular focus on their relationship towards sexuality and violence.

There has never been a single form of masculinity, but there have always been several variations of masculine gender identity, parallel to each other and sometimes competing. Gender was traditionally closely tied to class: the masculinity of a peasant differed from that of his lord, that of the courtier from that of the carpenter. The relationship between these social categories was always complex and prone to shifts. In any discussion of masculinity during this period, it would be misleading to talk of an "ideal of masculinity" in England. There were instead a number of masculinities specific to different classes of men (see esp. Foucault 1988, King 2004, Connell/Messerschmidt 2005). This observation is not unique to the period between the Restoration and the mid-18th century; since the 1990s sociological and historical research has argued and demonstrated that there has always been a plurality of masculinities as well as constant features in the formation of masculinities (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 846). There was never one ideal of masculinity that was strong enough to subdue all others (French/Rothery 2012 10-15). Scholarship suggests that during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance class was the first category in defining a person's identity while gender came second (see Foucault 1988, Trumbach 1990, McKeon 1995, Karras 2003, King 2004, Shepard 2005 and others). But during the 17th century and especially the late 17th century, gender became more important in categorising a person, according to these historians. The formation of modern gender relations and configurations is assumed to have emerged in the Renaissance, between 1450 and 1650, following the disruption of the monastic ideal and a more positive revaluation of marriage by Protestant leaders such as Martin Luther (Connell 1995 186-7, Karras 2006 18). The period of the late 17th and early 18th century is thus a particularly interesting moment in the history of masculinity. Masculinity was an immediate and conscious social concern after the challenge that the interregnum and the emerging republican discourse posed to the patriarchal order. In the restoration and early 18th century, texts on masculinity practically flooded the print market. Plays were part of this textual production, many of which were explicitly concerned with masculinity. The comedy between 1660 and 1728 thus provides a window into cultural discourses about masculinity. The comedy was a space in which gender conflicts could explored and in which traditionally aristocratic masculinity was losing ground.

As gender is part of the organising principles of social and political structures, gender is firmly anchored in the minds of individuals. Gender thus influences social practices as well as the imagination. The period discussed here was shaped by ideological turmoil and upheaval, of which gender and gender relations were important and prominent elements. The theatre was a space in which those changes could be explored and denounced or propagated. Comedies were very consciously placed into this discourse that connected gender and politics. The abrupt changes in the 17th century led to a perceived break with the past, which was embodied in the ageist rhetoric of many comedies. The reconciliation of aristocratic identity without the strong link to the glorious past fails in later Restoration comedies. This failure is symbolised in the breakdown of aristocratic masculinity and embodied by the rake and the fop, who were increasingly conflated (see chapter 3). The comedies were part of an effort to reformulate and reshape aristocratic masculinity in order to tear down obsolete and potentially disruptive tendencies of male aristocrats. The creation of undesirable or problematic rakes and the staging and ridiculing of the fop by playwrights revealed their awareness of the struggles for aristocratic male identity and the focus on gender as an attempt to negotiate the demands of a rapidly changing world. The political system still privileged aristocratic men over wealthy businessmen and the comedies also played a part in culturally exalting aristocratic modes by ridiculing wealthy citizens. It would be beyond the scope of this study to compare the use of the ridiculous citizen and the fop as sometimes opposing and sometimes conflating types, but it appears that whereas the figure of the fop became more prominent towards the end of the 17th century, the figure of the wealthy but ridiculous citizen became less popular. Mostly, comedies did not attempt to present the masculinity of businessman as the new model of exalted masculinity and as the form of masculinity that could sustain the patriarchal order. The fop and rake represented extremes of aristocratic masculinity, which due to the aristocracy's social role was by default the exalted form of masculinity, that is hegemonic masculinity. This hegemony was not only cultural; these men also ensured the continuity of the patriarchal order by making and enforcing policies.

During this period the concept of power and the basis of power (on the level of the state, and thus by analogy the family, see chapter 2) were widely negotiated and renegotiated. Scholars such as Michael McKeon, Thomas King, Alexandra Shepard and Raewyn Connell largely agree that the emergence of modern patriarchy is tied in with the paradigm of sexual difference that was proposed by Enlightenment thinkers. Gender (masculinity as well as femininity) was intricately and often explicitly linked with politics. In the peculiar political and ideological climate after the Restoration (1660), the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the Hanoverian succession (1714), England was a patriarchal society. In recent years, the concept of patriarchy has been critically explored and it has been demonstrated that patriarchy takes many different shapes (see e.g. McKeon 1995). Even more

importantly for the history of masculinity, the two concepts of patriarchy and masculinity overlap. However, as Shepard argues in her study *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, "despite the force of patriarchal ideology […] it would be mistaken to equate manhood with patriarchy, or to view manhood as wholly in relation to it" (Shepard 2005 249). As argued above, Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity provides a framework to discuss the relations between patriarchy and masculinity.

Connell's concept (originally 1995, reworked with Messerschmidt 2005) of hegemonic masculinity and D.Z. Demetriou's (2001) as well as French/Rothery's (2012) reassessment of the concept make it possible to discuss the ways in which men experienced those competing concepts of masculinity and how they affected and were affected by the patriarchal order as well as social changes. Connell is a sociologist whose concept of masculinity stem from a series of sociological studies into Australian education and gender politics in the 1980s (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 850). These were explored in her 1995 monograph *Masculinities*, which contained a brief section that outlined Connell's theory on the historical evolution of modern hegemonic masculinity. A second, slightly revised edition was published 2005 and in the same year Connell and Messerschmidt published an article entitled "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept". Connell and Messerschmidt define hegemonic masculinity as "the pattern of practice (i.e. things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 832), which is essentially the same definition Connell provided in *Masculinities* (see above). This pattern of practice is not necessarily performed by the majority of men, but was always normative, defined by Connell/Messerschmidt as embodying "the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 832). It is important to note that by this definition, even men who do not practice hegemonic masculinity still profit from the patriarchal system and are thus complicit in the practice of hegemonic masculinity.

French and Rothery (2012) observed that the advantage of Connell's concept is that it "ensures that we view gender relations as inherently about power, and (to a large degree) in struggles that are conducted in a social 'space' using cultural knowledge and practices as weapons" (French/Rothery 2012 6). The struggles surrounding gender and patriarchy – the concerns that were expressed in the portrayal of the rake and the fop – can be understood within the broader framework of the ideological struggle of redefining patriarchy and the political system. The practices of the fop relegated him to the status of a complicit man; his behaviour did not fit in the normative, hegemonic model and was unsuited to exercise power over women or men of lower social status. However, the fops did not notice that their behaviour was a direct threat to the hegemony of their class and to the patriarchal

subordination of women; their ignorance of the threat they posed was not only due to their own foolishness but also because they were of a status similar to that of men holding hegemony and because their manners were an exaggeration of those exercised by hegemonic men. The rake's position was more problematic. In some comedies, the rake embodied hegemonic masculinity, if only because there was no valid alternative. However, in every comedy the rakes considered themselves as hegemonic and believed that they were the ones in control. This is most obvious in Dorimant, the main character in George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676). Dorimant was firmly in control of the men and women around him. He became an exception to the rule. Furthermore, especially after 1688, the conflict between the rake's and the fop's class and their failure to exert hegemonic masculinity became more of an issue.

However, French and Rothery also argue that Connell's concept of hegemony is problematic as it works with an inflexible concept of authority. "Put simply […] Connell's shifting 'hegemonic masculinities' seem to conflate two distinctive processes: the underlying hegemonic patriarchal distribution of power and authority in society, between men and women, or between different types of men; and less rigid, less constraining social stereotypes of appropriate male and female behaviour, which changed over time and which were socially more variable than is allowed for by notions of hegemony" (French/Rothery 2012 11). While French and Rothery's distinction between those two processes is important, a study of comedy must of course mainly be concerned with the societal stereotypes of appropriate behaviour, as stock types were designed to be stereotypes. However, it would also be fallacious to analyse masculinity in the comedies purely in relation to the development of societal stereotypes. Playwrights aimed to hold a mirror to their contemporary society (distorted to either satire or sentimentalism) and they criticised the distribution of power and authority within their society by doing so (see chapter 2).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity is also useful to relate men as presented in literature and media to the lives of actual men (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 839-841). While the hegemonic model of masculinity is not necessarily practised by a majority of men, it is presented as a model to aspire to and disseminated via different media. Playwrights invested in the masculinity discourses, turned the stage into a tool to not only to present hegemonic masculinity, needed to perpetuate patriarchy, but also to define it. The rake and the fop could be used to negatively define hegemonic masculinity; while both types (but especially the rake) believe themselves to be members of the group of hegemonic males, the comedies present them as lacking the properties of hegemonic masculinity and upholders of the patriarchal system. Their status as aristocratic men, as part of the ruling elite, would require them to uphold the patriarchal system, upon which society rested, and their failure to do so had possibly serious repercussions.

Demetriou's refinement of the concept by adding the distinction of "external" and "internal" hegemony can be fruitfully used for the closer discussion of this failure. Simply put, external hegemony describes the dominance of hegemonic and complicit men over the majority of women while internal hegemony describes the hierarchy of dominance between men (Demetriou 2001 341). Connell and Messerschmidt add to this by pointing out that in order to maintain patriarchy, masculinities have to be policed (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 844). Demetriou's concept of external and internal hegemony provides a method to talk especially about the fop's position in relation to other men. Talking about internal hegemony makes it possible to consider and analyse the power relations between different forms of masculine identity (see also Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 844-45) and thus the way in which the fop, although he was a male character, figured lower on the social scale than women in some plays.

Another relevant refinement or modification of Connell and Demetriou is Alexandra Shepard's work *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (2003). Shepard argues that alternative conceptions of masculinity are not simply "subordinate, complicit or marginalized" in relation to hegemonic masculinity. The meaning of masculinity varies according to age, marital status, social status (class) and adherence to different cultural constructions of masculinity such as the ideal of the disciplined householder in contrast to the "robust fraternity" and rowdiness of alehouse patrons (Shepard 2003 93-126). Hegemonic masculinity, as Connell understands it, is of course only one of these variants, but Shephard's addendum suggests that hegemonic masculinity is not a monolithic ideal but that in different contexts, hegemonic masculinity is expressed in different ways. Jennifer Low's conclusion in her study *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (2003) supports this understanding of masculinity. She argues that masculinity, or manhood, was understood along "several different axes […] gentlemanliness as opposed to commonness, manliness as opposed to womanliness, maturity as opposed to boyishness [….] It functioned differently even for the same people in different contexts" (Low 2003 170). In analysing the rake and the fop in comedies, the most important axes were gentlemanliness opposed to commonness and manliness as opposed to womanliness. As will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5, effeminacy, the conflation of manliness and womanliness, was a widespread concern among contemporaries. The distinction between gentlemanliness and commonness was being renegotiated at the time; the rake and the fop both claimed to define gentlemanly behaviour but they lost the authority to define gentlemanliness, or aristocratic behaviour. Citizens, meanwhile, became increasingly confident in their right to demand certain qualities from the aristocratic men who ruled the country and their right to have a voice in the definition of aristocratic masculinity. Gentlemanliness and hegemonic masculinity were not necessarily identical, but, as will be argued later, there was a desire to make them identical. In a world full of power struggles and

renegotiations of political power and class relations, the ideal that the men responsible for politics, the aristocracy, would behave in a manner that would ensure the stability and continuation of the patriarchal order was held up by playwrights of different political colours. They did not all agree on what traits qualified a man for this role as the upholder of patriarchy, but they were all agreed that the rake and the fop did not qualify, even in comedies in which the rake is a positive character.

02: Turbulent times and theatre

In the time after the restoration, the thetre was thriving. For the aim of this study, namely to trace how the rake and the fop were placed in the English comedy to expose the troubled intersection of masculinity, patriarchy and authority/hegemony, it would not suffice to concentrate on a small number of plays. An wider selection of plays was necessary at the expense of in-depth analyses of individual plays. The significance of the single play for the purpose of this dissertation lies in its relation to the others rather than its own particular meaning. The selection of representative comedies was challenging; during the period discussed here, a large number of comedies was produced and while some had a run of only one night, others were revived throughout the whole period. The popularity of the plays, however, was not a sufficient criterion for the selection; there were several factors that affected a play's popularity which were not necessarily connected to its content. Apart from the obvious and timeless obstacles a play faced, such as other events taking place at the same time or being staged at the same time a widely popular play was also staged, there were other practical factors such as theatre politics (see below). It was also not sufficient just to focus on those plays which have evoked much critical interest. The consequence would have been chronological gaps, i.e. missing information on the gradual development of the rake and the fop, whereas the 1670s and the decade between 1700 and 1710 would be overrepresented. Part of the reason for the imbalance is academic prejudice in the 20th and 21st century towards the plays of the 1670s but the theatrical context at the time also plays a large role in this imbalance. In 1660, Charles II had issued two royal patents to two companies (the King's Company, managed by Thomas Killigrew, and the Duke's Company, managed by Sir William Davenant) (Hughes 2002 1). Most of the rights to older plays lay with the King's Company. The Duke's Company therefore attracted more of the successful contemporary writers, because they relied on new plays while the King's company was relying more on old favourites. When the companies merged in 1682 the lack of competition led the company to shun the risk of putting on new plays. Theatrical competition only resumed in 1695 when a group of actors led by Thomas Betterton left the company to form their own company and new plays became more frequent again (Hughes 2002 1-3).

The time between 1660 and 1728 brought many changes to the world of the theatre itself that ranged from the reopening of the theatres in 1660, the introduction of women on stage, changeable sceneries, constantly changing locations and new forms of comedy and new stock types such as the rake and the fop. The theatres themselves changed: Sir William Davenant, one of the two original patent holders after the Restoration, introduced changeable scenery, which was soon a regular and indispensable part of professional theatre. It meant that a recognizable representation of popular spaces in London was possible in plays, for example the Mall or the New Exchange (Hughes 2002 3).

Derek Hughes points out that this could make the clash between public and private visual; "In *The Man of Mode*, for example, Dorimant's chief discomfitures occur, or originate, outdoors" (Hughes 2002 4). With the rise of the domestic ideal see chapter 7), this dichotomy between inside and outside, the public and the private, became more important and the theatre now had the visual means to emphasize the nature of a space. The various companies during this time also frequently changed their location. Colley Cibber attributes the indifferent reception of several new plays in 1707 to the bad acoustics in the new Haymarket Theatre, claiming that several new plays met with better success when they were played by the same actors in Drury Lane (Cibber 1740 2:2).

The cast was an important influence on the populariy of a play. While cast lists for the first decade after the Restoration are often incomplete, it became common for a list of the cast to be printed with the published texts (Hughes 2002 5). It also became common for playwrights to comment on the performances of the actors in the introduction to their texts so that it is possible to consider the choice of actors when analysing a particular character. The actor Robert Wilks, for example, who became popular in his role as Sir Harry Wildair in George Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699), was known for playing fine gentlemen. If Colley Cibber was cast for a role, it can be assumed that the character was meant to be ridiculous, and in most cases, have some attributes of a fop. Actors and playwrights also frequently attributed the success of a play to the performance of the actors. Cibber, for example, claimed that John Crowne's political satire on Whigs, *City Politiques* (1683), "liv'd only by the extraordinary performance of Nokes and Leigh," two famous comedians (Cibber 1740 I.149). Cibber wrote this at a time when the Whigs were dominant and he expressed Whig sympathies, so it is unlikely that the play's success was really only dependent on its two comedians, but the claim gives us an indication of how important actors were to the success of a play.

The portrayal of the rake and the fop underwent a significant transformation on the stage in the 1690s, which are generally the final decade considered in an analysis of Restoration drama. It seemed necessary to expand the analysis into the 18th century to trace the ways in which the rake and the fop evolved. However, in the first decades of this century, there was no natural break-off point, as the rake and the fop began to peter out gradually as prominent character types. The plays of the Restoration and the early 18th century faded out from performance (and out of anthologies) in the late 18th century (Corman 1992-1993 310), indicating a change in taste and the decline of the relevance of the social topics at the centre of the comedies. However, as a cut-off point the late 18th century would have expanded the time frame too far. The latest play to be considered here is therefore Cibber's play *The Provoked Husband* from 1728. The play has a peculiar genesis that renders it appropriate as the last characteristic play to conclude the analysis. Cibber used Vanbrugh's fragment *A Journey to London* (which was unfinished when Vanbrugh died in 1726) as his basis, which he rewrote in some parts and

expanded into a full-length play. Its consequent status as a quasi-collaborative work of two vastly different contemporaries makes it a convenient cut-off point for an analysis of Restoration and early eighteenth-century comedy.

Most comedies were based on a French, a Renaissance or a classical original. However, the comedies will be treated as English works of their time in the following chapters. This is standard practice in most scholarly works on the period (with the exception of introductions of course). Parts of the ideological conflicts that form the construction of masculinity in the comedies are lifted from their originals, parts are introduced by the English author, but it is also reasonable to assume that when the playwrights adapted foreign comedies for the London stage, they adapted to the taste of the public and to their own ideological purposes. All the analysed plays were written for the stage in London and thus reflected attitudes and discourses, which were pertinent to the city rather than the country at large.

Historical Context

It is difficult to discuss any piece of literature without taking its context into consideration. Specifically in an analysis of the (troubled) connections between masculinity and patriarchy, focused on hegemonic masculinity, it is crucial to understand the context in which the authors, the audience/readers and the fictional characters were situated. Gender and other aspects of identity are never formed in a vacuum; they are always closely bound synchronically and diachronically to the specific space and place where a person or character finds him- or herself. As discussed in chapter 1, the rakes and fops portrayed in the comedies of the late 17th and early 18th century were aristocrats whose identity and values were heavily influenced by the ways in which aristocratic values were shaped and linked to the past, even though, paradoxically, they were also ageist and ridiculed tradition and nostalgia. However, Robert Hume cautions that “context can help us see probabilities, but the meaning of any particular text is not governed by general sociohistorical likelihood” (Hume 2010 369). All works have multiple contexts and it would be impossible to discuss every context in detail before approaching the analysis of rake and the fop in the comedies. Nevertheless, the following sections will sketch the most important historical context of the relationship of the rake and the fop to hegemonic masculinity.

The timespan covered here starts shortly after the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660, continues through the Glorious Revolution in 1688 (when James II, Charles’ brother, was supplanted by his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange,) to the Hanoverian succession in 1714, ending shortly after George I died and was succeeded by George II (1727). During this time, the power of parliament grew, annual sessions and regular elections were established, England fought two wars against the Dutch (under Charles II), one against France under William III and was heavily involved in the war of the Spanish succession during Queen Anne‘s reign. It was the time when the Bill of Rights

was passed and the two parties of the Whigs and the Tories were established (see e.g. Webster 2005 6, Somerset 2012 189). John Locke wrote his *Two Treatises on Government* (published anonymously in 1689) to justify the Glorious Revolution, while the Jacobites remained a constant threat. All these developments had a profound influence on the English people, including the playwrights and the audience. Although the Interregnum had merely lasted 11 years and it was only 12 years between the beheading of King Charles I and the accession of his son Charles II, the Civil War and the Interregnum had split the century in half. As Leo Braudy observes: "The prewar and the postwar define a chasm that lasts long after the generations who actually participated are dead and gone. In the second half of the 17th century, both the French and the English looked back over the divide of their civil wars at the earlier part of the century as if they were an entirely different world" (Braudy 2005 7). Part of the reason the early 17th century seemed to be an entirely different world to those living in the Restoration was the upheaval the Interregnum had caused in the ideology of government, which had been allegorically linked to the ideology of family and relations between husband and wife. The connection between patriarchy and gender was disrupted and older forms of hegemonic masculinity, ensuring the continuity of patriarchy, became invalid.

The time after the Restoration was thus a time in which the dominant ideologies were breaking down. Paula Backscheider claims that "the history of a nation seems to be composed of times when there is a dominant ideology and of times when that ideology breaks down and no longer functions in an organic, relational whole that seems both 'valid' and 'natural'" (Backscheider 1993 xii). Charles II and traditional monarchists learned the painful lesson that history can never be reversed. The monarchy was restored; the political system and the political consciousness and confidence of the population were forever changed as the developments of the Exclusion Crisis (1679-1680) and the Glorious Revolution (1688) proved. While the Restoration of the monarchy was widely supported in 1660, tensions soon arose (see e.g. Weber 1990 193; Schürer 2003 475; Harris 2007 35-38). And even though the Restoration was widely celebrated not all welcomed Charles's return. Tim Harris, for example, quotes a certain Margaret Dixon from Newcastle upon Tyne who exclaimed on 13 May 1660, shortly after Charles's proclamation as king but before his return: "What! can they find noe other man to bring in then a Scotsman? What! is there not some Englishman more fit to make a King then a Scott? […] There is none that loves him, but drunk whores and whoremongers. I hope he will never come into England, for that hee will sett on fire the three kingdoms as his father before him has done" (Harris 2007 35).[1] The quote, albeit by one woman who is probably not representative of the whole

[1] Recent research suggests that anti-Scottish sentiment was more prevalent in republican and anti-Stuart literature than is often acknowledged (see for example Harris 2007 50 -51). As this is an issue that rarely arises in the comedies (that is, not once in the comedies I have analysed), it is left out here.

population, was first of all rather prophetic, as her sentiment that none "but drunk whores and whoremongers" loved Charles would become a common sentiment. It also shows an early example of blatant disregard for dynastic principles. Margaret Dixon of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne also shared the sentiment that would lead to the Glorious Revolution: that the parliament (or an undefined "they") had the right to "find" someone "fit to make a King". She was not alone: Harris also quotes a Londoner claiming that "Lord Lambert deserved the Crowne and to bee King better then King Charles the Second" (Harris 2007 37).[2] By 1666 satires against the king were widespread and by the 1670s the majority seems to have been disenchanted with the king and royal power. High taxes and a trade slump had turned many people against the republic in 1659 and people placed high hopes on Charles to turn this development around. However, the economy was slow to recover and initially Charles levied even more taxes to make up for his abolition of feudal dues (Harris 2007 38).

Overall, the Civil War and the Interregnum had deepened the social, political, cultural, and ideological divides that could only be briefly overshadowed by the return of the king and the celebrations. The question of the royal succession soon became religious too. Charles II's wife remained without children, and while he had numerous illegitimate children, the heir apparent to the throne was his brother James, the Duke of York, who was openly Catholic.[3] Charles II clung on to patrilinear, traditional succession and felt that the entire institution of the monarchy would be threatened if this principle was violated. For a majority of his subjects, however, religious considerations outranked dynastical considerations. The first culmination of those differences was the Exclusion Crisis between 1679 and 1681. The Exclusion Crisis started when supporters of Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, introduced the so called Exclusion Bill in the House of Commons on 15 May 1679 (a move which made him the key founder of the Whigs). The aim of this bill was nothing less than the exclusion of James, Duke of York, from the succession to the throne due to his religion. While Charles II eventually won and James was not excluded, James was only king for three years after Charles's death in 1685. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 established James' Protestant daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange, as joint monarchs. William III and Mary II were then faced with the Bill of Rights, which reinstated some power to the aristocracy; the 18th century is frequently called the aristocratic century by historians (Stater 1999 8).

[2] The examples provided by Harris come from court records. Harris also points out that those cases were probably brought to court by other ordinary citizens who supported the monarchy.

[3] His religious affiliation became widely known 1673, when he refused to take the oath prescribed by the new Test Act.

The debates surrounding the Exclusion Bill evolved into the focal point for the deep ideological division that had become apparent in the pre-Civil War era (Webster 2005 6). The Tories and the Whigs emerged during the Exclusion Crisis in the 1670s, but the debate about the suitability of James, then Duke of York, as heir to the throne merely provided a focal point around which radically different notions about the nature of society and economy could coalesce (Somerset 2012 189). Jonathan Scott considers the 17th century as a period in which "institutions were fragile and ideas powerful" (Scott 2000 24). Political ideas were closely tied to questions of gender and the political uncertainties and the changing structure frequently translated into anxieties surrounding gender.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 was a heavy blow against traditional notions of patriarchy. It struck at the roots of the traditional assumptions of society and therefore at the roots of gender. A royal succession based on an act of parliament, rather than on tradition, held implications for the conception of family, which in turn had implications for the relations between men and women. Those in power could and should be questioned by those they ruled, was the implication of the Glorious Revolution. A king who ruled wrongly could be disposed. Mary Astell outlined this implication for private life in 1700: "if absolute Sovereignty be not necessary in a State, how come it to be so in a Family? Or if in a Family why not in a State; since no reason can be alleged for the one that will not hold more strongly for the other?" (Astell 1986 28-29) Those were ideas that had the potential to undermine patriarchy and the dominance of men over women (see also Staves 1979; Anderson 2002). Or, to use Connell's terminology, Astell's rhetorical question demonstrates that with the change in the political systems, hegemonic masculinity had to adapt to justify the continued survival of patriarchy and the dominance of men over women. The result of such questions was a "society in crisis, one experiencing turmoil that may result in permanent change." (Backscheider 1993 xii). Laura Rosenthal suggests that the libertine comedies of the Restoration were not so much about sexuality and gender, as they were about the philosophical exploration of the "proposed erotic foundation [marriage] of civil society itself" (Rosenthal 2001 8). It should be added that they were also explorations of new ways to establish the hegemony of aristocratic men, of finding a new hegemonic masculinity to uphold society. However, while those playwrights rejected absolutist Filmerian (see below) as well as republican Lockean models of authority, they were unable to offer an alternative. Later playwrights, especially in the early 18th century, grounded the power of the husband and father along similar lines as Locke and the revolutionaries of 1688 based the king's power on a contract. The wife and children gave up their independence to the intellectually superior and more experienced husband and father. That was a radical move as "legal, social, religious, philosophical and medical doctrine in pre-Restoration England […] assumed a non-negotiable hierarchy between men and women" (Rosenthal 2008 93). The new model gave more agency to women and socially inferior men, but it also formed the new basis of

hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy. As this foundation was being built, the prominence of the rake and the fop faded and they became more and more negative characters (see chapters 3 and 4). They were only needed now as counter-points to the protagonists who embodied the new concept of hegemonic masculinity, men who were capable of upholding the existing, new system of modern patriarchy.

The nature of patriarchy itself changed from what McKeon calls patriarchalism to modern patriarchy (McKeon 1995 296). Patriarchalism is a term usually employed to describe the absolutist conception of government and society described by Robert Filmer in his *Patriarcha* (published posthumously 1680). The shift was marked by several linked factors: the return of the aristocracy to power and the role of several peers as well as parliament as a whole in the creation of kings (and queens) and their philosophical justification. Male authority was rearranged in the wake of changes to the political system, which rearranged patriarchy along fewer formal hierarchies. Other authors use the terms "paternal patriarchy and fraternal patriarchy" to describe the same shift (e.g. Pateman 1988). Those terms are more useful as they describe one fundamental difference: the authority of fathers declined and men looked to their peers rather than their fathers to legitimate their own position. "Fraternal patriarchy insisted on the basic equality of all (reasoning, non-slave, European, propertied) men in the public sphere, but defined these men as full citizens in a way that their wives and sisters were not" (Rosenthal 2008 94). It is thus not surprising that fathers and (elderly) husbands in the comedy are often comical figures while the relationships between equal men are explored on stage.

However, this insistence on the basic equality of men also held the threat of destroying the legitimisation of the aristocracy's power. Rosenthal's qualification hints at this by describing this as the equality of "propertied" men. Most younger sons were not, however, propertied. Especially early 18th century comedies, which were dominated by Whig playwrights who subscribed to John Locke's fraternal conception of patriarchy, there needed to be other qualifications to earn the rank of "gentleman" than merely noble heritage. In the next section, the composition of the nobility and the criteria beyond lineage are discussed. Despite the increasing political power of the aristocracy, Michael McKeon's observation is that the events showed disenchantment with aristocratic ideology:

> But the Hanoverian Settlement and the demise of patriarchalist political theory cannot be understood simply as a matter of constitutional politics. They also represent one out-come of a more general, early modern disenchantment with aristocratic ideology. For present purposes, aristocratic ideology can be summarized as the set of related beliefs that birth makes worth, that the interests of the family are identified with those of its head, and that among the gentry, honor and property are to be transmitted patrimonially and primogeniturally, through the male line. The attack on these beliefs took many forms. It was even argued that honor of birth has nothing to do with internal

> virtue and competence - hence the depravity, corruption, and incompetence of male aristocrats. (McKeon 1995, 297).

For my purposes, this summary is also sufficient. The expectations this ideology placed on male aristocrats is evident as well as the sharp distinction between the oldest brother and younger brothers, whose position was radically different.

This new ideology emerged in London and came from the class of the citizens. The political landscape was heavily influenced by the expansion of towns (especially London), trade (domestic and foreign), industry and the professions. This led to a rapid increase in the class of people which would later be called the "middle class," and which were most often described as "the middle station" or "the middling sort of people" (Earle 1989 1-2). While this was still a pre-industrial society and most merchants and shopkeepers were not very wealthy, a number of them prospered and became richer than many aristocrats after the Restoration. Apprehension surrounded the shifts in economic power; as mentioned above, aristocrats resented being dependent on men from the middle class. It is remarkable that such concerns as well as panic over trade and estates were often expressed in pornographic pamphlets after the Restoration (Schürer 2003 475). The very existence of pornographic pamphlets that dealt with economic (as well as political) matters demonstrates how closely gender was tied to the shifting power balances. In the Restoration comedy the stereotype of the citizen, the wealthy merchant, was that of a mean-spirited, greedy and blundering man who lacked manners and, significantly, was usually impotent (see chapter 5). The tone changed and by the early 18th century merchants were often portrayed as more sober and respectable and more "manly" than gentlemen. Political issues could be presented as matters of gender, but, more importantly for the present analysis, political and economic issues influenced notions of gender.

The very act of staging plays in the early Restoration was a rejection of the Interregnum and an affirmation of the 'restored' order. According to Hughes, "[t]he stage and monarchy were inseparably suppressed and inseparably restored, and for much of the 1660s the twin restorations remained ostentatiously linked, as play after play re-enacted and reconsecrated the miracle of 29 May" (Hughes 2002 1). Susan J. Owen points out that the reopening of the theatres was symbolic in its rejection of the Puritan values that had caused the closure of the theatres at the beginning of the interregnum. In addition, Charles II "was actively engaged in discussing with the dramatists what they should write, and with theatre management what should and should not be staged" (Owen 1996 11-12). Charles II and his circle had a close connection to the theatre, which was political as well as aesthetic and sexual. Indeed, Nancy Klein Maguire suggests that while the Jacobean theatre had "criticized the regime in power, the Restoration playwrights bolstered the new government by organizing a theatrical/political

work which produced pro-Stuart propaganda" (Maguire 1992 85; see also Backscheider 1993 25-27, 30).

It is hardly surprising that in the first decade after the Restoration, the celebration of the Restoration was the most prominent topic. This took the form of revived plays from the Renaissance, translations from the French or new plays which featured usurpers and the Restoration of the noble rightful heir (Hughes 2002 30-43). The largely uncritical celebration of the restoration dominated tragedy and tragi-comedy, but a comparable fashion in comedy was not established, despite some early comedies ridiculing the Interregnum like Sir Robert Howard's *The Committee* (1662) and John Tatham's *The Rump* (printed 1660) (Hughes 2002 38). *The Committee* is one of the plays analysed in later chapters; the cavaliers in this comedy are not rakes but they can be considered the forerunners of the type. However, the popularity of these sort of comedies soon subsided as the differences between the king and his subjects became more evident (Backscheider 1993 34). Etherege's first play *The Comical Revenge*, for example, was staged in 1664 and has traditionally been considered a forerunner of the "comedy of manners" (Hume 1972 365). Although it features more heroism than Etherege's later plays, it is hardly a celebration of the Restoration.

Plays, tragedies and comedies continued to draw on contemporary politics for their inspiration, but as the mood of the nation quickly turned against the king (see above), the celebration of the Restoration gave way in the 1670s. The Exclusion Crisis in the late 1670s and early 1680s gave rise to plays concerned with succession and the divide between the Tories and the Whigs. Hughes claims that the Tory triumph "turned hitherto ambivalent dramatists into partisans" (Hughes 2002 307). Playwrights started to avoid political and sexual complexities after 1682. The last comedy to deal with the Exclusion Crisis is perhaps also the most interesting: Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683). The play was originally banned in June 1682, but finally staged in January 1683. John Harold Wilson cites John Dennis as a "dubious authority" who claimed that the Lord Chamberlain at the time was secretly a Whig and used his authority to suppress the play. According to Dennis, Crowne appealed to Charles II, who lifted the ban (quoted by Wilson 1948 ix). Wilson assumes that the play was "dangerous" (quoted by Dennis) because the Tories had to consolidate their victory in the summer of 1682 and needed to gain control of the grand juries of London (Wilson 1948 ix). The play features two rakes, Florio and Artall, who cuckold two old Whig citizens, thereby triumphing over them (cuckolding was a popular plot device, see chapter 5).

Edward Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds* (1681) and Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683) were successful, but the last examples of ribald comedies. Hughes observes that "[p]reoccupation with the reconciliation of law and desire swamps sex comedy, which now forms a tiny proportion of the total

comic output, though reform comedies show considerable variety in their treatment of promiscuity prior to the inevitable moment of renunciation" (Hughes 2002 331).The reason for the disappearance of ribald comedies, presumably, not a sudden change in public taste, but the fusion of the King's Company with the Duke's Company, which made the risk of staging new plays, which provoke attacks for their licentiousness, less attractive for the company. For the analysis in the following chapters, this means that the merging of the companies needs to be taken into account before conclusions about the development of either the rake or the fop as a type can be drawn. After the Glorious Revolution the trend towards avoiding overt politics increased.

The political affiliation of the majority of prominent playwrights changed within the period analysed in this study: while the popular playwrights of the early Restoration were predominantly Tories, who sided strongly with monarchist discourses, the majority of the popular playwrights the early 18th century favoured the Whigs, who were, not incidentally, in power then (see Hughes 2002). Playwrights often appeared to be opportunists rather than stalwart proponents of one party. Cibber, who claimed in his autobiography to be a steadfast Whig, avoided political engagement during the uncertain times at the end of Queen Anne's reign. After the Tory victory in 1710 there are indications that Cibber actually expressed support for the Tories (Loftis 1955 367-368). The actor-managers at the time (Cibber, Wilks and Thomas Doggett) certainly knew that "their precarious tenure at Drury Lane was conditional on their not offending the ministry, and that the prosperity of the theatre was conditional on their not offending either the Tory or Whig half of the nation" (Loftis 1955 368). There were exceptions. Steele, for example, was a prominent Whig and part of the Kit-Cat Club, a club of prominent Whigs (see Allen 1931 for the influence of the Kit-Cat Club on the theatre). And even if a playwright like Cibber expressed political support for the Tory party, his ideology remained more closely aligned with that of the Whigs.

The companies were subjected to regulation by the Lord Chamberlain and his subordinates (though it was not quite clear to what degree) and patentees, who received grants from the crown which empowered them to lead groups of actors. Cibber pointed out in his autobiography that "in all the Letters Patent for acting plays &c. since King Charles the First's Time, there has been no mention of the Lord Chamberlain, or any Subordination to his Command or Authority, yet it was still taken for granted that no Letter Patent, by the bare Omission of such a great Officer's Name, could have superseded or taken out of his Hands that Power which Time out of Mind he always had exercised over the Theatre" (Cibber 1740 2:11). The ministry could punish offending companies of actors by orders of silence. "It is important to remember that the Licencing Act of 1737 did not inaugurate close regulation of the stage, but merely provided effective machinery to administer it" (Loftis 1955 366). This is part of the reason why the most popular playwrights often aligned with the ruling party and why plays often conformed to the ruling paradigms; there is no space to discuss the differences between ideal masculinity as

perceived by Tories versus that of Whigs, but there were clear differences, such as Tories favouring rakes more than citizen, while Whigs favoured younger sons and were harsher on libertinism.

Playwrights had to satisfy not only the Lord Chamberlain, but also the audience that immediately influenced their finances. The ideology of the audience and the way the audience perceived the plays was of crucial importance to the portrayal of masculinity on the stage. The idea that the Restoration audience was more homogenous than the Renaissance audience and was comprised mainly of courtiers has long been dispelled, for example by Harold Love (1980). He analysed not only prologues and epilogues (which can be problematic sources, as they were unlikely to be accurate), but also other contemporary sources on playgoers and an analysis of the geographical position of playhouses and their relative reputation for attendance. Love's conclusion is that the "middle class" regularly attended the theatre and that the theatres were certainly not the "preserve of an affluent elite" from the early Restoration onwards (Love 1980 38). The audience's moral sensibilities certainly differed from those of later generations; George Meredith claims in 1877 that "the men and women who sat through the acting of Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) were past blushing" (Meredith 1919 12) and Samuel Johnson voices his disgust for Restoration drama in his lives of Otway and Dryden (Johnson 2006a and b). Hume cautions that "[w]e have every reason to believe that neither in the Middle Ages nor at any other period did everyone think and read identically" (Hume 2010 362) and the Restoration and early 18th-century audiences were certainly very diverse. Playwrights frequently complained in their prologues and epilogues of how difficult it was to please everyone (e.g. Cibber's epilogue to *Love's Last Shift*, 1696). Andrew P. Williams believes in the influence of different sections of the audience during that time:

> It is obvious that the court circles and beneficiaries of royal patronage were extremely influential on the Restoration stage in the two decades after the return of Charles II, but at the century's end, the dwindling economic power of the gentry had greatly compromised that influence. The rise of the merchant class did not constitute a complete removal of the courtier audience, but it did signal the presence of a politically and economically powerful segment of the audience influence on the London theater world grew as did its economic importance. (Williams 1995 123)

It is obvious that those changes had an influence on the stage; whether this was for economic reasons (less patronage) or political changes (the dominance of the Whig party) or because playwrights were themselves part of this changing society is only of marginal interest here. However, it follows that certain changes in the portrayal of aristocratic masculinity on stage between the Restoration and early 18th century do not necessarily suggest a chronological development but rather a change in the dominant ideology present on stage. The development that will be discussed is thus strictly the

development of the portrayal of aristocratic masculinity on stage and its relationship to patriarchy by employing the concept of hegemonic masculinity.

Jeremy Collier's attack on the theatre was the most notable one symptom of this widespread belief in the stage's influence. Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) started a pamphlet war that lasted on and off until 1726. According to Matthew J. Kinservik, "[t]he pamphlets that constitute the Colliers controversy reveal that Collier, his allies, and even his enemies believed that plays had the power to regulate morality and, therefore, that theatres ought to be regulated" (Kinservik 2002 19). Allegedly, the archbishop of Canterbury sent a letter to Collier to thank him for writing the treatise and Daniel Defoe claimed that free copies of *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* were dispensed at the door of at least one Anglican Church (Hellinger 1975 96). However, despite his allies' efforts, Collier ultimately failed. Most of the plays he attacked remained staples in the London theatres for decades (Hume 1999 481). And, rather ironically, many of the plays Collier attacked were written in an effort to move away from immorality, for example Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) (Hume 1999 484). Hume believes that while Collier had little to no influence on the history of drama, "this episode has something to tell us about the cultural position of drama at the end of the seventeenth century" (Hume 1999 481). Collier's attack is also an example of how political the theatre could be. Collier was a non-juror, who refused to take the new oaths acknowledging William III as head of the Church. Regarding the propaganda that the successful (and bloodless) revolution must show that it was blessed by providence, he stated that the idea of divine right by providence would "make the Devil, if he should prevail, the Lord's anointed" (quoted by Erskine-Hill/Lindsay 2012 11). Howard Erskine-Hill and Alexander Lindsay thus conjecture that the attack on the theatre (dominated by Whigs in favour of the Revolution) might have been partly politically motivated, rather than the expression of purely moral outrage (Erskine-Hill/Lindsay 2012 11-12).

The changing tastes, hinted at above, and Collier's attack were related to the Reformation of Manners, a movement closely connected to the history of gender during the late 17th and early 18th century. The Reformation of Manners would last into the 18th century, when Richard Steele and Joseph Addison were its most famous proponents; Steele saw his comedy *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) as part of the movement, though their most important publication were *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. There were, strictly speaking, two campaigns against immorality after the Glorious Revolution. The military setbacks and the king's demands for money during the 1690s necessitated a government campaign to counter the growing resentment against William III's rule. This "Courtly Reformation" propagated that William and Mary were providential rulers, who had a divine right to rule by Providence. William was thus the divinely appointed moral reformer, who purged the court of sin (both Charles II and James II

were considered libertines). Catholicism was blamed as the source of the immorality after the Restoration, and the Glorious Revolution thus presented an opportunity for reform (Cruickshanks 2000 72). These efforts were connected to the efforts of independent societies for the Reformation of Manners. Religious societies, which aimed to counteract loose Restoration manners, had existed from the 1670s onwards. However, after the Glorious Revolution in 1688, the movement grew to unprecedented proportions and forms. Societies for the Reformation of Manners sprang up all over the country and "[t]heir importance was amplified by the widespread perception that the revolution had come about through divine intervention: it was God's way of giving England one last chance to reject sin, irreligion and ill government" (Dabhoiwala 2007 290-291). While such societies were thus sometimes supported by William and Mary (Barker-Benfield 1992 57), other societies were opposed to the court and might have had Jacobite sympathies (Cruickshanks 2000 73).

Besides campaigning for stricter laws against adultery and fornication, they also these societies also hunted down offenders and brought them to court (Dabhoiwala 2007 292-299). Entertainments such as gambling, masquerades, ale-houses, prostitution, obscene literature, bearbaiting, bullbaiting, cockfighting etc. were also targets for the reformers (Barker-Benfield 1992 56). Faramerz Dabhoiwala points out that reformation societies echoed the "concerns of tradesmen, shopkeepers, artisans, and other middling householders" (Dabhoiwala 2007 300), who were naturally opposed to rioters, particularly aristocratic ones, breaking windows and disturbing the peace (see chapter 6). The ultimate reason for the disappearance of societies for the Reformation of Manners in the 18th century, Dabhoiwala claims, was their failure to bring the elite to justice; only the poor suffered for their vices (Dabhoiwala 2007 309). The mid-18th century saw a trend of putting more blame on poor people for being sexually indecent, because the indecencies of the upper class tended to take place in private (Dabhoiwala 2007 310-311). The Reformation of Manners, and the comedies, had attacked upper class/aristocratic men for their transgressions, but while this reflected a widespread frustration with aristocratic men failing to be role models and a suspicion that they were not fit to uphold order, these men did not suffer for it in court. Both libertinism and effeminacy remained common in the aristocracy.

Aristocracy as a class

The social impact when England transitioned from a medieval to a modern state was considerable. Victor Gordon Kiernan claims that "state power and the reign of law were being established by absolutist monarchy;" while the "aristocracy, its half-brother, survived in altered guise, a permanent anachronism, and often canker, in the life of Europe" (Kiernan1988 6). It is doubtful if the peers of the Restoration felt that they were an anachronism but their claim to cultural and political hegemony (defined in the introduction as "the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading

position in social life" (Connell 2005 77)), had to be reinforced; hegemonic masculinity as aristocratic model of masculinity was an important tool, but as discussed earlier, it was difficult to define what aristocracy as a class meant. This section sketches the development of the aristocracy as a class and the development of its values to establish the background for the rake and the fop and the methods with which they attempted to keep their privileges and how they established their class. Needless to say, this is a subject which fills several books. The following discussions are thus kept as short as possible and focus on the significance of those developments on masculinity and particularly masculinity in the Restoration and early 18th-century comedy and only give a brief diachronic survey of aristocratic masculinity and how it relates to stage characters in the Restoration and early 18th century.

In the introduction aristocracy was defined for the purposes of this dissertation as peers and their families as well as the upper gentry (in the 16th century those were considered the *nobilitas maior* and the *nobilitas minor* respectively (Stone 1965 53)). Those terms as well as the term "gentry" are never used in comedies; the characters (as well as the playwrights in their prologues and epilogues) speak about "gentlemen" and "lords" or "peers". Despite the blurred boundaries between the lower gentry and those below them, the members of this aristocratic elite, at least as represented on the Restoration and early 18th-century stage, considered themselves fundamentally different from those who could or did not claim noble blood. Technically, the gentry was split between untitled gentlemen and esquires, knights and baronets, a group that Lawrence Stone calls "the country *élite*". This group expanded vastly in the early 17th century (Stone 1965 51), a development that had implications for the class consciousness of aristocratic men (see below). While the behaviour of the protagonists in comedies speaks for their natural assumption of privilege and status, they are most commonly labelled as "gentlemen" rather than being titled. Etherege, for example, labelled all the named male characters in his comedy *The Man of Mode* (1676) as "gentlemen" in the *dramatis personae*, including the libertine Dorimant, although the fop is called Sir Fopling Flutter, who is either a knight or a baronet. There are a few "lords" in comedies, but for the most part protagonists were identified as members of the gentry rather than the peerage. As the plays were set in London, these were most often younger sons who tried their luck in the capital. Before the Restoration around 90% of these gentlemen were acknowledged as such by the heralds (Earle 1989 6). The number after the Restoration must have been similar. In the comedy, trying their luck usually meant trying to find an heiress to repair their fortune.

The peerage, the only clearly defined group, emerged from the formation of the English parliament and its roots reach far back into early medieval times which reflected on their class-consciousness, although few of the peers could trace their title back this far. John Maddicott suggests that the first assemblies to resemble the later parliament occurred in the time of Aethelstan, the first king to rule over something like a united England and whose reign began in 924 (Maddicott 2010 5). After the

Norman Conquest, the tradition of the assemblies remained (Maddicott 2010 65). While it is uncertain how powerful the nobles were in Anglo-Saxon and early Norman times, they began to see themselves as representatives of the realm rather than representatives of the king's interest in the late 12th and early 13th century. In the years between 1189 and 1225 the council transformed into a body that closely resembled the later parliament. "From a feudal gathering of tenants-in-chief summoned to give obligatory counsel to the king, it became one which claimed the right to advise, to consent to taxation, to have a say in such prerogative matters as ministerial appointments, and to represent the whole realm" (Maddicott 2010 153). This was the time which the defenders of the Glorious Revolution referred back to in defence of their actions, a clear sign that the aristocracy of the late 17th and 18th century saw itself in the tradition of those powerful medieval barons (though, for various reasons, few of the peers were actually directly descended from them).

Underneath the peerage was the lesser nobility, the gentry. The gentry was a very diverse group, defined by G.E. Mingay in 1976 as "all the landowners below the peerage and above the yeomanry, owning after 1550 between 40 and 55% of the land" (Mingay 1976 16). The highest rank within the gentry was that of the baronet. This rank was formally created by James I in 1611 who, as part of his efforts to raise money for war, awarded this title to those gentleman, who paid a certain sum of money (Braudy 2005 140) and was thus a recent title in the Restoration. Underneath the baronets were the knights and the esquires. By 17th-century estimates, only 8–9 per cent of the gentry held the title of baronet or knight and their income in the 17th century stretched from under £100 to several thousand pounds; a title was thus no indication of a man's wealth. Important county offices and county seats in Parliament tended to be held within a small circle of the wealthiest families. However, due to various circumstances, some families of equal wealth were excluded from this circle (Mingay 1976 17). The situation was thus very complex and it would be beyond the scope of this study to analyse a character's relative social status based on those indicators. Another reason why it is difficult to impossible to gauge the relative social position of characters in a play based on their title and wealth is that both the peerage and the gentry were greatly expanded in early modern times. Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes estimate that between 1500 and 1700 the number of families claiming gentility quadrupled while the general populace only doubled (Heal/Holmes 1994 12). Just before the Civil War, the Stuarts also greatly expanded the number of titled men; while there were 55 peers at the death of Elizabeth I, there were 126 peers in 1628. James I trebled the ranks of the knighthood within the first 18 months of his reign (Mingay 1976 5). The trend appears to have continued in the Restoration. It is not quite clear how much of a difference was made between those peers and gentlemen of ancient families and newer ones, although it is obvious that the newer families had fewer connections. The English aristocracy was also remarkable for the ease of exit from their circle. Younger sons of peers were automatically part of

the gentry. The younger sons of dukes and marquises used the courtesy title of "lord" but their own sons (and daughters) would be without title. John Vincent Beckett notes that most younger sons disappeared from historical view (Beckett 1986 23-24), so it may be assumed that they and their descendants dropped out of the higher ranks of the gentry too.

The question of what qualities distinguished the gentry and the peerage from the commoners was widely discussed in early modern times as well as after the Restoration. Mingay sums up the criteria for the ideal gentleman to possess as "education, profession, military rank, wealth, freedom from manual labour, and the right to wear arms" (Mingay 1976 2). Other writings were more normative in their demand for certain qualities; Mingay quotes one Sir William Vaughan, who in 1626 stated that the gentleman "must be affable and courteous in speech and behaviour. Secondly he must have an adventurous heart to fight and that but for very just quarrels. Thirdly he must be endowed with mercy [...] Fourthly, he must stretch his purse to give liberally unto soldiers and unto them that have need" (Mingay 1976 2). About one century later, Defoe writes in *The Compleat English Gentleman* (1729): "The Gentleman is to be represented as he really is, and in a Figure which he cannot be a Gentleman without; I mean, as a Person of Merit and Worth; a Man of Honour, Virtue, Sense, Integrity, Honesty, and Religion, without which he is Nothing at all" (Defoe 1729 37). The preceding pages of the work establish that Defoe is either being ironic when he says that this is what the gentleman "really" is or that rather than referring to social reality he refers to the "real" ideal; in any case it gives an indication of what he should be.

Commenters from the 16th to the 18th century were generally in agreement of what a gentleman should not be: connected to trade. In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) John Locke encouraged the learning of a trade as part of an education, but was aware of the difficulties:

> I have one thing more to add, which as soon as I mention I shall run the danger of being suspected to have forgot what I am about, and what I have above written concerning education all tending towards a gentleman's calling, with which a trade seems wholly inconsistent. And yet I cannot forbear to say, I would have him *learn a trade, a manual trade;* nay two or three, but one more particularly (Locke 1989 255).

There is, of course, a vast difference between learning a trade and exercising a trade. In his *The Compleat English Tradesman* (1726), however, Daniel Defoe hints that the distinction between the middle class and the gentry was eroding. The wealth and importance of merchants was growing and trade had become so "vastly great [...] no wonder that the gentlemen of the best families marry tradesmen's daughters, and put their younger sons apprentices to tradesmen; and how often do these younger sons come to buy the elder son's estates, and restore the family, when the elder, and head of the house, proving rakish and extravagant, hast wasted his patrimony [...]" (Defoe 2007a 235). Defoe,

who was partial to tradesmen, also asserted that the ancient families near London were being worn out and replaced by a "new race of tradesmen, grown up into families of gentry". On top of that, "many of our trading gentlemen at this time refuse to be ennobled, scorn being knighted, and content themselves with being known to be rated among the richest commoners in the nation. And it must be acknowledged, that, whatever they be as to court-breeding and to manners, they, generally speaking, come behind none of the gentry in knowledge of the world." Defoe even quotes a tradesman, who was reproached by a gentleman for not holding his tongue before gentlemen, and who retaliated "No, Sir, but I can buy a Gentleman and therefore I claim a liberty to speak among Gentlemen" (Defoe 2007a 233-234). Similar sentiments were often expressed by citizens in comedies and depending on the playwright, ridiculed by the citizen's lack of manners and foolishness, or supported by his intelligence and morals. This was a recent development: in the 16th and early 17th centuries merchants apparently lacked a feeling of class consciousness or pride in their work and saw the accumulation of wealth through trade as a means to buy land and become part of the gentry (Stone 1966 51). Of course, there were still many merchants who aspired to join the gentry, but the newly developed class conciousness started to erode the importance of aristocratic status.

Technically, a gentleman was a man who was entitled to bear arms. Heralds continued to make periodical visitations to determine the social status of men but in practical terms most people were disinterested in the herald's judgments and anyone who looked and behaved like a gentleman became accepted as one (Earle 1989 7-8). In *The Compleat English Gentleman* (1729) Daniel Defoe plays with the debate throughout the first chapter. He claims: "Our modern Acceptation of a Gentleman then, and that in spite of defeated Reasoning, is this, A Person BORN (for there lies the Essence of Quality) of some Known or Ancient Family; whose Ancestors have at least for some time been rais'd above the Class of Mechanicks. [...] It is enough therefore that we can derive for a line of two or three Generations, or perhaps less; so that in short, the main Support of the thing, which is Antiquity, and the Blood of an ancient Race, is a tender Point" (Defoe 1729 32). The 1730 edition of Nathaniel Bailey's dictionary provides a similar definition: "In our days all are accounted Gentlemen that have money" (quoted in Earle 1989 6). The potential anxiety arising from these eroding boundaries and the merchant families' encroachment into the space which the noble and gentile families considered their own are expressed and at the same time ridiculed in the figures of the rake and the fop, whose behaviour could be all too easily aped by those from lower classes (see chapters 4 and 5). As those characters are portrayed as increasingly disruptive and even dangerous to the modern state, they undermine the connection of aristocracy and worth. At the same time, however, many plays (especially from the early Restoration, but also 18th-century plays) ridicule the merchants as well.

The exact role of the nobility (peers as well as gentry) was never stable. In the late middle ages, the War of Roses brought about heavy casualties among the aristocracy; many of the old families were extinguished. And while in 1485 Thomas, Lord Stanley, "crowned" Henry VII on Bosworth Field with Richard III's battered crown, ending the War of Roses, "[r]oyal authority brought aristocratic kingmaking to heel" (Stater 1999 8). The Tudor monarchs found it preferable to bind the remaining lords as well as those who were newly created to the court rather than to their own land (Stater 1999 8). Stone titled his 1965 study of the aristocracy in the Renaissance *The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558-1641*, indicating the loss of relevance and power of the aristocracy. However, Jennifer Low points out that it was less a crisis of aristocracy than of aristocratic masculinity. The disintegration of patriarchal institutions affected aristocratic women relatively little but eroded the aristocratic man's sense of identity (Low 2003 3). This early modern identity crisis of the aristocratic man continued into the 18th century and is reflected both in the rake and the fop. Despite this, their claim to authority within the patriarchal system remained strong and when the old patriarchal institutions disintegrated, they had to seek new ways to establish their hegemonic masculinity in order to remain at the top of the internal hierarchy of men. In the time this study is concerned with, the time after the Restoration, power tipped towards the aristocracy.

After 1688 the aristocracy came to control the executive and legislative aspects of governments. They dominated in the Cabinet, they occupied the highest ranks in the military, the civil service and (albeit to a lesser extent) the judiciary. During the 1690s the Commons also fell under the spell of the aristocracy; seats were purloined to insert sons and other retainers into them. This situation continued until the 1832 Reform Act (Beckett 1986 10). The struggle over aristocratic masculinity, hegemony and the increasingly problematic nature of the rake and the fop in the comedies was thus of immediate political relevance; those were men who held the political power in the country, while the merchants held the economic power. Marriages between wealthy merchants' daughters and gentlemen (occasionally rakes) reflected on the one hand the historical reality (Earle 1989 7), while on the other hand they represented the need to balance these groups. In presenting the rake and the fop as incapable of governing themselves and their families, their inability to run the country was symbolised.

Ownership of a landed estate was not only of material importance in early 18th-century Britain. Landed income was a distinguishing feature of any aristocratic family, whether peerage or gentry (Earle 1989 5). While some of the lower gentry were professional, educated men, the ideal was always to hold land or live from inherited capital. Stone speculates whether one should consider the peerage a class based on similar economic interests above all other criteria. In 1669 one Edward Chamberlayne explained that "[t]he laws and customs of England ... expected that each of [the degrees of honour] should have a convenient estate and value of lands of inheritance for the support of their honours and

the King's Service" (quoted by Stone 1966 56-57). John Barrell notes in his article about masculinity and prestige in Early 18th-Century Britain that the

> discourse of civic humanism was the most authoritative fantasy of masculinity in early-eighteenth century Britain; it was this discourse, above all, which represented civic freedom not only as an emancipation from servility and dependence, but as an emancipation from desire. The ownership of an independent landed estate was curiously but still wisely accepted as offering a prima facie guarantee that a man was emancipated from the desire for material possessions (Barrell 1989 103).

Heal and Holmes quote one Worcestershire gentleman, William Higford, who advised his grandson in 1650 that "every acre of land you sell you lose so much gentile blood" (quoted by Heal/ Holmes, 1994 22). Yet in 1650 the Civil War had already impacted the fortunes of many gentile families. Sir John Oglander from Yorkshire observed that a hundred families of the ancient gentry were ruined by the war "so that none of them could appear again as gentlemen .... and so many base men, by the other's loss and slaughter, made gentleman" (quoted by Heal/Holmes, 1994 23). Property and lineage were closely connected but the upheavals of the Civil War and the Interregnum disrupted the social order in this class. Part of the purpose of the comedies (as well as most other texts) was to establish a new hierarchy. As will become apparent in the following chapters, playwrights portrayed the owners of those estates as lacking in those positive qualities ideology credited them with. Their failure to comply with the ideal was not only comical; it also portrayed a direct threat to the nation, as those men, who should be the representatives and guarantors of patriarchal order, were lacking those very qualities. The rake and fop embodied the twisted new forms of ancient expressions of aristocratic male privilege which had to be rooted out for civic humanism (the ideal in most early 18th century comedies) to flourish. The close connection of land and noble blood was significant among the ranks of the gentry.

The principle of primogeniture and entail [the practice of limiting the inheritance of property usually to the oldest son or closest male heir] were a key element of the debate on individual worth versus the coincidence of birth. The entail strengthened the position of the eldest son. A common complaint from the early 17th to the 19th century was that primogeniture and entail made the eldest son disobedient and arrogant towards his father (Jamoussi 2011 43). While good education was often seen as the distinction of the gentleman (see above), the eldest son often did not attend university but was educated at home. This eldest son was commonly regarded as spendthrift or libertine, dangerous especially to young women (Jamoussi 2011 54-55); younger sons, on the other hand, had to find a way to make their fortune and were more likely to study seriously at university. The plight of younger sons was often a focal point in the comedies, in which younger sons struggled to establish themselves as gentlemen, but were left destitute by the strict rules of primogeniture and entail. While primogeniture was introduced in England after the Norman Conquest and had become established before the end of the 13th century everywhere but in Kent (Jamoussi 2011 18, 20), the practice of entailing larger landed

estates began in the late 13th century and was strictly settled in the mid-17th century, just before the Restoration (Jamoussi 2011 14). The system left the younger sons dependent on the goodwill of their fathers and elder brothers to at least pay for their education or give them enough capital to set themselves up. The nature of the comedy demanded, of course, that the recourse of the younger brothers was marriage to an heiress.

While the aristocratic men on stage (especially the rake and the fop) exude a sense of privilege, and although in the following discussion of the comedies "aristocratic" privilege is frequently mentioned, those privileges were largely a sense of entitlement that did not reflect the legal situation. The English aristocracy enjoyed significantly fewer legal privileges than their counterparts abroad did. What privileges there were, were mainly limited to peers and only to the male holder of the title, not his heir (with one important exception, the right to wear a sword, see chapter 6). The privileges of the peerage were representation in a separate House of Parliament, the use of proxy voting in the House of Lords, the right to enter protests in the Lords Journal and the right to trial by fellow peers in the House of Lords (that privilege was used on only 34 occasions between 1499 and its abolition in 1948 (Beckett 1986 24)). Like other Members of Parliament, they could not be arrested in civil causes during parliamentary sessions. But they did not enjoy fiscal privileges or rights of hereditary military office-holding (Beckett 1986 24). The aristocratic elite was mainly distinguished by their privilege based on land and on customs rather than legal distinctions. Their superior income gave them access to a higher level of education (which in turn gained them access to offices and certain professions), a standard of comfort and of course a high degree of leisure (no rake or fop is ever portrayed to do work).

Comedies and their relevance to male identity

Any work claiming to be concerned with comedy ought to answer the question of what a comedy actually is. However, questions of genre are always precarious. The most useful definition here comes from Fredric Jameson, who wrote that "genres are essentially literary institutions, or social contracts between a writer and a specific public whose function is to specify the proper use of a particular cultural artifact" (Jameson 2002 92). Misty Anderson bases her definition on Jameson: the "most likely promise made to the audience in that generic contract after Shakespeare" as "the guarantee of a play that culminates in a marriage that affirms the community. […] After Shakespeare most writers of stage comedies turned to the Greek New Comedy for their plots, which placed a greater emphasis on courtship and marriage than Aristophanic, satiric, or Jonsonian comedies had" (Anderson 2002 9). This tradition of comedy allowed for a discussion of proper, socially acceptable gender identity as a main concern in comedies. The trend in Restoration drama placed less emphasis on action as plot, as Aristoteles did, and shifted focus to the characters and the representation of human nature (Williams

1995 20). This was a development that give rise to the types of the rake and the fop as complex embodiments of masculine group identities as playwrights paid increasing attention to the construction of their characters. Especially in later comedies, the main plot sometimes involved an already married couple (e.g. Vanbrugh, *The Relapse*, 1696; Burnaby, *The Modish Husband*, 1702; Cibber, *The Careless Husband*, 1705) but there was always at least one plot that culminated in marriage. The culmination in marriage made comedies the ideal locus to demonstrate desirable and undesirable gender identities. By focusing on the "war of the sexes", men had to prove themselves in a deceptively light-hearted way.

To understand the rake and the fop in the context of their genre, it is essential to know what playwrights and audience expected from a comedy beside its culmination in marriage. The classical tradition that the comedy should both instruct and delight, based on Horace's work, was still strong in late 17th and early 18th century (Williams 1995 18). Comedies and the laughter they evoked functioned as a social corrective. In relation to the two stock-types analysed in the following chapters, the comedies work in different ways; the rake is usually reformed and his journey to socially acceptable behaviour is set as an example; or he does not reform and is consequently punished (with a few exceptions; see chapter 7). The fop, on the other hand, is set up for ridicule; by laughing at the fop, the audience works to repress those effeminate tendencies of aristocratic masculinity, not only in society at large but also within themselves. Both characters could be used for humorous or lighter scenes as well as more sinister ones, to formulate desirable forms of aristocratic masculinity, and to use their cultural hegemony to bring stability by providing negative examples of aristocratic men who, instead of upholding the patriarchal system, threatened to destroy it by their thoughtless behaviour.

While the rake and the fop were used for a certain construction of masculine identity by presenting destructive examples, they are not, to use Mikhail Bakhtin's term, "grotesque". Bakhtin's work on the grotesque and laughter nevertheless offers a useful framework to review the function of laughter regarding the corrective qualities of those stock types. While comedies were expected to produce laughter, it was not the laughter that Bakhtin describes as liberating in the grotesque, but a bitter laughter, an uncomfortable laughter at the dismal state of society that demanded correction. Dryden distinguishes between two types of laughter; he disdains the laughter that springs from low comedy or farce, a undiscriminating laughter that lacked wit. In the preface to *An Evening's Love* (1668) he considers his comedy to bring a "nobler pleasure", a satisfied laughter based on wit and understanding. He also distinguishes between laughter that is "mockery" and laughter that is "related to the entire living process" (Bakhtin 1984 64). The farces, which Dryden deplores, retain the grotesque elements that had their roots in medieval folk culture; the comedies that will be analysed work on a more modern level. One that Bakhtin defines for the 17th century as "the place of laughter in literature belongs only

to the low genres, showing the life of private individuals and the inferior social levels. Laughter is a light amusement or form of salutary social punishment of corrupt and low levels" (Bakhtin 1984 67). The "low individuals" in Restoration comedy might very well come from the highest level of society.

Bakhtin does not have anything to say about Restoration comedy, but he mentions Molière's comedies (which had a considerable influence on Restoration comedy) as part of the formalisation of "carnival-grotesque images." He claims that "the carnival-grotesque form exercises the same function: to consecrate inventive freedom, to permit the combination of a variety of different elements and their rapprochement, to liberate from the prevailing point of view of the world, from convention and established truths, from clichés, from all that is humdrum and universally accepted" (Bakhtin 1984 34). Laughter in the 18th century, according to Bakhtin, was degraded to the private, the trivial private way of life (Bakhtin 1984 101). But, as has been demonstrated before, in relation to the patriarchy, the private way of life was intrinsically connected to the larger political system; men needed to prove their power over themselves and over their household before they could be deemed suitable for government, for the upholding of the political, patriarchal system. A gentleman who could not govern his household could no longer claim to rule over a merchant simply by bringing up his ancestry; he needed to prove that he was as capable and as worthy as his ancestors.

While the following chapters establish that the comedy was by its very nature political and that the laughter the comedy evoked was not merely superficial, comedies were always considered less political than tragedies. Although comedy, as a genre, was popular on the stage, it was considered inferior to tragedy by critics. Dryden complained in "Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy" that "[t]he humour of the people is now for Comedy; therefore, in hope to please them, I write comedies rather than serious plays […] but it does not follow that from that reason, that Comedy is to be preferred before Tragedy in its own nature" (Dryden 1926b 121). Joseph Addison later wrote in the *Spectator* no. 39 (1711) that "a perfect Tragedy is the Noblest Production of Human Nature" and "it is capable of giving the Mind one of the most delightful and most improving Entertainments" (1:163). The contemporary critics of comedy were part of a "long tradition of hostility" towards comedy (Farley-Hills 1981 1). Tragedy, according to Addison and others, was the space in which serious moral questions were tackled and in which pleasure and moral lessons were combined. Comedy was the genre that dealt with more trivial matters. In the *Spectator* no. 44 (1711) Addison added that it would be "an endless Task to consider Comedy in the same Light [as tragedy], and to mention the innumerable Shifts that small Wits put in practice to raise a Laugh" (1:191). Small wits, presumably, included Colley Cibber, who was very open about raising laughs as his chief object (Cibber 1966 1.20-23). However, even Dryden wrote that "I confess my chief endeavours are to delight the age in which I live" (Dryden 1668b 116).

It used to be the custom to divide comedies of the period into "comedy of manners" followed by the "sentimental comedy" in the 1690s. These assumptions have been dispelled since at least the 1970s, although as early as the 1920s scholars such as Joseph Wood Krutch attacked the idea of a neat generic division (see e.g. Hume 1972). Hume points out that the "manners" strand of comedies was never dominant (Hume 1972, 365), whereas comedies in the tradition of Ben Jonson and other Caroline authors were very popular. Critics up to the 1960s have considered them to be of a lower quality and thus distorted the discussion of Restoration theatre. The tone of comedies shifted in the late 1670s and the careless celebration of sexuality which is still often associated with Restoration comedy in general was dampened by more painful portrayals of sexual dilemmas. This trend was perhaps caused by Etherege's positive (and even celebratory) portrayal of the rake Dorimant's sexual exploits and his careless flaunting of vice in *The Man of Mode* 1676, as Hughes suggests. Hughes also adds that the trend was "accentuated" by the beginning of the Exclusion Crisis in 1678 (Hughes 2002 185). Etherege's comedy was of enduring popularity, but it was also sinister beneath its apparent light-heartedness (see chapter 4) and other playwrights seemed to shy away from portraying a rake so positively. The Exclusion Crisis also put a dampener on the casual celebration of the court ideology of libertinism, not only because James's character was under scrutiny but also because several plots (such as the Popish plot, a fabrication) threatened the country.

Even if it is impossible to categorise the comedies of the period precisely as Restoration comedies of manners and sentimental comedies, it is worth pointing out that Colley Cibber's play *Love's Last Shift* from 1696 used to be considered the first "sentimental comedy", a claim to fame it has since been denied (Hughes 2002, 383). Scholars have pointed out that Colley Cibber's play did not introduce any new elements into the form of the comedy. It is more noticeable that *Love's Last Shift* appears to be the first comedy which used "sentimental" elements with great success. Thomas Southerne recommended the play to the theatre company (see dedication of the play and Cibber 2012, 1.212-13), whereas his own play *The Wife's Excuse* (1692), which is often cited as example of an older comedy that made use of sentimental plot elements, was a failure. Those sentimental elements were an indicator that some playwrights and patentees had picked up on the mood of the population, during the beginnings of the Reformation of Manners, which culminated, for the theatre, in Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698).

A more useful distinction than "comedy of manners" and "sentimental" comedy is way is the distinction between cynical comedies, which often did not end on a generally hopeful outlook, and the exemplary comedy which was more optimistic. Two playwrights who stood on opposite sides, cynical and exemplary, were Cibber and Vanbrugh. Cibber's first comedy, *Love's Last Shift* (1696), was an exemplary comedy; the rake Loveless reforms due to the intrigue of his virtuous wife Amanda and his

friend Worthy, and much of the fifth act is taken up by speeches praising virtue and reform. Vanbrugh immediately wrote a sequel that was staged a few months later, *The Relapse* (1696), in which Loveless relapses and Amanda has to learn that she is powerless in the face of sexual vice and infidelity.[4] In the prologue to his posthumous collaboration with Vanbrugh, *The Provoked Husband* (Prologue 1-10), Cibber claimed that the old Vanbrugh had seen the error of his ways. Cibber's claim is the only source for a possible reconsideration of Vanbrugh's dramatic principles, which makes it at least doubtful. The prologue tells us more about Colley Cibber's own principles than Vanbrugh's. Cibber might even have thought the ending of *The Relapse* more true to real life than his own sentimental ending in *Love's Last Shift* but he never intended to portray real life. In his autobiography of 1740 (Cibber 2012), he wrote that: "as I allow nothing is more liable to debase and corrupt the Minds of a People than a licentious Theatre, so under a just and proper Establishment it were possible to make it as apparently the School of Manners and of Virtue" (Cibber, 2012 II 26). In the first volume he wrote that "it has often given me Amazement that our best Authors of that time could think the Wit and Spirit of their Scenes could be an Excuse for making the Looseness of them publick" (Cibber 2012 I 266). Cibber and Vanbrugh agreed that a play had to encourage the audience to be better and had to make an attempt to influence people's minds and be active in discourses surrounding proper behaviour – in particular, it seems, the behaviour of licentious men. It was merely their methods that differed.

A similar dichotomy to that between Vanbrugh and Cibber can be observed in the dispute between Richard Steele and John Dennis, which was carried out in a more theoretical manner. In the *Spectator* No. 65, of 1712, Steele had attacked George Etherege's *The Man of Mode: or, Sir Fopling Flutter* (1676), which still enjoyed popularity on the stage and had just been revived. Ten years later, John Dennis picked up this attack on the play in order to attack Steele's own play *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), a play Steele had been working on for 20 years (Loftis 1952 184-189). *The Conscious Lovers* had not yet been staged but it was heavily advertised in periodicals and Steele's correspondence as the best play to have graced the English stage (Kenny 1968 xiii-xiv). This aggressive marketing of Steele's own play aroused John Dennis's scorn. Dennis did not belong to the wide circle of people who had heard the play read in the years prior to its staging, so his attack on it was founded on the idea that Steele's previous attack on *The Man of Mode* was proof of his inaptitude as writer of a comedy. "I would fain know where he learnt, that Nature in its utmost Corruption and Degeneracy, is not the proper Subject of Comedy? […] after he has been writing what he calls Comedy for twenty Years together, [he] shews plainly to all the World, that he knows nothing of the Nature of true Comedy […]" (Dennis 1939b 243).

[4] Cibber considered *The Relapse* to be a compliment to him; Vanbrugh not only ennobled the fop from Sir Novelty to Lord Foppington but Cibber also considered Lord Foppington "the chief character" of the play, which was the first larger part offered to him after Sir Novelty (Cibber 2012 I 215-216).

For Dennis, all comedy must be some form of satire, as the utmost corruption and degeneracy is the proper subject of comedy (Dennis 1939b 243). Their quarrel also highlights certain aspects which need to be considered in any analysis of aspects of comedies, such as masculinity: hardly any play would claim that the characters were typical proponents of their class, even if playwrights kept assuring the readers in their forewords (or the audience in a prologue or epilogue) that their characters mirrored social trends. Through this interest in showing the corrupt and degenerate nature of "Nature" (whether to ridicule it or to correct it) they magnify (among other issues) concerns about the masculinity of aristocratic men which tragedies could not portray.

03: The Rake as a Type

While the rake has theatrical forebears from medieval Vice to the Jacobean trickster-hero, he is a quintessential Restoration figure. He is often considered to be the most dominant presence on the Restoration stage. In contrast to the fop, the rake was not a ridiculous figure. While the type is generally labelled rake-hero, the term would not be appropriate for this chapter, as it explores early 18th-century plays as well in which the rake is not the protagonist or, if he is, a protagonist on whom the title "hero" can hardly be bestowed. Whether it is justified to call the rake a "hero" in any play at all was already discussed in Hume's 1982 essay "Concepts of the Hero in Comic Drama, 1660-1710"; a rake was often the protagonist of a comedy but rarely a hero in a narrower sense (Hume 1982 61-81). The rake is usually connected to the philosophy of libertinism, the most notorious expression of aristocratic masculinity. Libertinism provides a focal point to analyse negotiations of masculine and aristocratic identity. In its essence, libertinism was inextricably linked to aristocratic male privilege, its performance and its perpetuation. The Restoration has retained its reputation as the time when libertinism was widespread at court. Courtiers delighted in shocking the public and displaying their sexual exploits, while still remaining polished and witty conversationalists who delighted as much in the art of seduction as in the consummation of their goal. Most studies of libertinism (Turner 1985, Weber 1986, Chernaik 1995 and others) focus exclusively on the period between 1675 and 1685, the short-lived heyday of libertinism. By the time of the Glorious Revolution in 1688, libertinism was increasingly marginalized at court and rakes on stage rapidly lost the dazzling qualities they once had. And there have always been less dazzling, darker versions of the rake present on stage, as criticism from the 1980s onwards began to stress to counter earlier tendencies in criticism.

Libertinism has also been associated with France both by contemporaries and by modern scholars. Maximilian Novak analyses this connection in his chapter on "Libertinism and Sexuality" (Novak 2008) in the *Companion to Restoration Drama*. He especially emphasises the importance of the prominent early 17th-century French libertine poet Théophile de Viau (1590-1626). According to Novak, de Viau's work already outlined the "basic doctrines of libertinism", namely that society was "an artificial product", the laws of which need not be taken seriously. Specifically,

> Marriage was just another burdensome, ill-conceived practice to be avoided at all costs." Life was to be experienced as much through the senses as through the mind, and the pleasures of the body taught far more truths than the learning promulgated by the universities. Since the young experienced the pleasures of the senses more fully than the old, they should ignore, as much as possible, the precepts delivered by those who could no longer experience the pleasures of life fully. (Novak 2008 55)

In de Viau's writing, Novak finds exactly what he considers as the set of characteristics of Restoration libertinism. It is a philosophy which is also celebrated by rake-heroes such as Dorimant (Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, 1676) and Willmore (Behn's *The Rover*, 1677) and it is the philosophy that is rejected by reformed rakes such as Loveless (Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*, 1696).

However: there have always been men from all classes who were unfaithful to their wives, had mistresses, frequented brothels and who failed to be discreet in these actions. And aristocratic men have always been privileged. Why should we pay special attention to those men in the 17th century? The first answer lies in the assumption by contemporaries that libertines shared a philosophy, even if this did not reflect the actual mindset of those men. The second answer is that which has been given above: the time after the Restoration and up to the mid-18th century was one in which England experienced several ideological (and political) crises, one of which was the struggle for a normative masculinity. In general, hegemonic masculinity is equivalent to normative masculinity. However, at the time those men who were in charge of the state (such as Thomas Wharton) were also perceived as libertines. Libertinism was not the way of life of the majority of adult aristocratic men, but it was perceived as such; there was therefore a danger that libertinism could become the normative model of masculinity. To attack the perceived ideology behind libertinism was thus to attempt to replace libertinism as a normative or hegemonic model of masculinity.

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the period after the Restoration was marked by instability which extended to gender identity and its intersection with class. Aristocratic masculinity, and the king's masculinity, were by default the hegemonic model of masculinity, as the country was a monarchy with a powerful aristocracy. The reshaping of aristocratic masculinity was thus an important factor in reshaping the country. Connell and Messerschmidt state that

> Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men. (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 832)

The problem after the Restoration was that there was no normative masculinity; there was no currently "most honoured way of being a man." Due to their social position, aristocratic men had to enact hegemonic masculinity, but it stood on an unstable foundation. The deep divide between the court and the city of London (and the countryside) prevented a universally acknowledged "most honoured" embodiment of masculinity. Libertinism and rakes on stage were often symptomatic of this crisis of masculinity and the lack of normative masculinity. Libertinism was part of an aristocratic understanding of masculinity, providing resistance against a more rational, controlled model of masculinity. The reformation of a rake on stage or the portrayal of an unrepentant, negative rake thus made a statement

about the flawed and undesirable nature not only of libertinism but of aristocratic masculinity, the model which had to be considered hegemonic because while it might not have been normative, it was enacted by those men who were in power. The rake symbolised to reformers, such as Steele and Addison, a value system that they actively sought to replace by putting emphasis on restraint and politeness as qualities that would ensure stability and the continuity of patriarchy (see e.g. Barker-Benfield 1992, Statt 1995, Carter 2001, McKeon 2005 and others).

The goal of this chapter is not to define several types of rakes such as "polite rakes," "extravagant rakes" or "judicious rakes" (all terms taken from Hume 1977 25). While Hume rightly points out that "to ignore these distinctions seriously distorts our understanding of the values which underlie these plays" (Hume 1977 25), the following observations intend to working out examine and contextualise rakes within patriarchy and their relationship to an overall reformulation of hegemonic masculinity without focusing on labelling the different variations of libertine aristocratic characters on stage. The following analysis will not define the rake but analyse the ways in which aristocratic and libertine characteristics were intertwined in characters on stage, how those characteristics were related to hegemonic masculinity and how libertinism related to other forms of masculinity. In order to achieve these aims some comedies which are frequently discussed in relation to the rake had to be left out (Etherege's *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* (1668) for example) while some plays were included which are not generally considered in studies on the rake such as Robert Howard's *The Committee* (1662), Thomas Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688) or Christopher Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1717). Due to the number of studies on libertinism and Restoration comedy that it is impossible to adequately present an overview of previous work. The following selected examples, therefore, cannot be exhaustive but are rather intended to give an overview of trends in scholarship on the rake.

The rake has been a figure of interest to critics ever since Jeremy Collier's attack in 1698 (see chapter 2) and 19th-century scholars wrote equally condemnatory evaluations of Restoration comedy. Only after the Second World War studies on the rake became less subjective. Dale Underwood's study *Etherege and the Seventeenth-Century Comedy of Manners* from 1957 concentrated on the figure and the plays of George Etherege. However, Underwood dedicated the first section of his book to "the fertile ground" of libertinism. Leo Hughes observes that "[rejecting] the earlier approaches to Restoration comedy in which emphasis was placed on immorality, on social mode or manners, or on wit, Mr. Underwood adopts a new point of view, that of values" (Leo Hughes, 1959 166). Underwood thus helped to position the rake as representative of broader social developments rather than merely mirroring the amorality in Charles II's court (see below). Another study from the 1950s touches on English rake-heroes only peripherally but nevertheless still provides an insight into the fascination of the rake: Leo Weinstein's study *The Metamorphoses of Don Juan* from 1959. Don Juan is, of course, the

arch-libertine. There was at least one Restoration comedy that was an adaption of the Don Juan story (Shadwell's *The Libertine* from 1675, see below) but in England, the myth only became popular after Byron's adaptions.[5] Still, Weinstein's distinction between glandular and cerebral Don Juan types, i.e. between a type which acts purely on instinct and relies on force, and one which uses superior wit to reach his goals, acknowledged the difference within the representations of libertinism which can be found in literary treatments of rakes (on the stage and beyond, in pamphlets, satirical poems as "glandular" types and in early novels such as Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748) more commonly as "cerebral" types).

Robert Jordan's chapter on the "extravagant rake in Restoration comedy" in the 1972 volume on *Restoration Literature* (ed. Harold Love) established the appealing side of the rake-hero, his extravagance and his larger-than-life qualities, which are still admired. It is one example of the often glorifying description of the type. In 1977 Hume stated in "The Myth of the Rake in 'Restoration' Comedy" that "reading modern scholarship, one might deduce that 'Restoration comedy' is full of unrepentant rakes; that the plays expound a 'libertine' philosophy; and that they are essentially hostile to marriage" (Hume 1977 25). Hume then sets out to dispel this persistent myth. Six years later, however, in 1983, Hume himself named his new study *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama 1660-1800* (Hume 1983), a title which claims dominance of the rake over a period of 140 years. A study named *The Restoration Rake-hero: Transformations in Sexual Understanding in Seventeenth-Century England* by Harold M. Weber (Weber 1986) reveals through its title that this author assumes a close link between rake-heroes and sexuality, which narrows down the definition of the rake.

Although Warren Chernaik does not focus on rakes on stage in his study entitled *Sexual Freedom in Restoration Literature* (Chernaik 1995), his work on the philosophical and cultural background of libertine thought is useful to position the rake in the cultural context of libertine discourse. Unfortunately, he simplifies libertinism frequently as "sexual freedom", which hampers his arguments. As he formulates it: "a consistent theme [...] will be the problems which arise when ideas originally developed in a political context by such authors as Hobbes and Locke are applied to the domestic sphere, and in particular to the conduct of sexual relationships inside and outside the constraints of marriage" (Chernaik 1995 18). The domestic sphere had strong political connotations at the time and especially in the comedy; Chernaik's work demonstrates the connection between political ideas and the amorous "intrigues" and courting in seemingly apolitical contexts. James G. Turner has published on 17th-century sexuality since the 1980s and has often focused on the libertine. In 1985 he wrote "The properties of libertinism" (Turner 1985) which focused mainly on sexual liberty, and in 2007 he

[5] Since the 19th century "Don Juan" has been used in English as synonym for "libertine" (OED).

published *Libertines and Radicals in Early Modern London: Sexuality, Politics and Literary Culture, 1630-1685* (Turner 2007). His focus is almost exclusively sexuality. Overall, Turner only mentions rakes on stage in passing, but his analysis also exposes the intersection of sexual and national politics. This was reflected in the comedies which often used sexual plots to emphasise political points.

Jeremy Webster, on the other hand, concentrates on the performative and political aspects of libertinism. *Performing Libertinism in Charles II's Court* (Webster 2005) analyses the ways in which the libertines in Charles II's court undermined the very system on which their privilege was based. "Indeed, the only way to show just how 'complicated' Restoration libertinism truly was is to elaborate fully both its embracing of aristocratic male privilege at the expense of other classes and women *and* its radical challenge to the patriarchal system upon which that privilege was based" (Webster 2005 6). Webster's study differs from the previously mentioned studies in his emphasis on the aspect of performance in Restoration libertinism. The writing of playwrights such as Etherege and Wycherley is, according to Webster, part of the same pattern as the libertine's scandalous activities. The libertines, as well as their plays, were "texts to be analyzed, interpreted and evaluated" (Webster 2005 2-3). Libertines (and other courtiers) consciously presented themselves as objects for interpretation and made their lives public. This habit of displaying themselves put them into the old-fashioned world of the court and highlighted their understanding of their masculinity and their identity as based on their proximity to the court and their performance of their privilege, which was now countered by the emerging discourses of privacy and domesticity. Patriarchy was changing but the libertines at court were slow to realise it (see chapter 2). Webster argues that "libertinism's blurring of public and private acts challenged the political strategies of Charles, and many of his ministers helped to shape the direction of the Restoration drama and expanded the sexual roles and identities available to late-seventeenth-century men and women" (Webster 2005 3). However, loyalist drama in the early Restoration tended to be tactfully critical of Charles's libertine tendencies and celebrated royal or noble monogamy (Hughes 1996 34-36). These difficult and often conflicting discourses are symptomatic for the Restoration comedy and the rifts are conspicuous in virtually every text.

Narrowing the figure of the rake on the stage down to his sexuality means to ignore much of the rake's role within the play's social configuration and to ignore the complex contribution of the figure of the rake to contemporary social discourses on power and the proper order of society. While sexual licence was part of libertinism, it belonged to the broader general framework of philosophy, aristocratic privilege and masculinity. None of the studies exploring the rake's sexuality deal with the intersection of sexuality and gender, instead they focus on the rake's (heterosexual) exploits. The sexual and politically radical aspect of libertinism which has dazzled and side-tracked scholars since the early 20th century has come under attack from historians, who put the 'darker side' of libertinism in the

foreground, such as the violent tendencies most historical rakes had. In *Rakes, Highwaymen and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman* Erin Mackie (Mackie 2009) titles the chapter on rakes "Always making excuses." In analysing the rake alongside two clearly criminal types, Mackie already makes a point; if the rake was not a criminal, he had at least strong criminal tendencies. Mackie's study suffers, however, from over-interpretations and an "imposition of present-day theoretical concepts on eighteenth-century material" (Hume 2010 373-74). Studies such as Barker-Benfield's *The Culture of Sensibility* (1992) place the libertine and libertinism in a broader historical context. Barker-Benfield stressed that to focus on the rake-hero's wit and his sexual exploits is too one-sided and indeed often too glorifying. Barker-Benfield's discussion of libertinism and effeminacy in the context of the emerging "culture of sensibility" situates both the rake and the fop in contemporary discourses and anxieties surrounding masculinity and economic developments.

As stated above, this is a small overview of the scholarship that pertains to the rake; in recent years the interest in specific types has waned, but the rake appears in studies of masculinity during the period. This overview hinted at a broader problem in the analysis of the rake: that of the definition of the type. The rake as well as the fop were seen as embodiments of actual contemporary aristocratic conceptions of masculinity. The endeavour to provide not only a short overview over the development of libertinism but also to provide a definition of libertinism is more complex than the often casual use of the term – even in scholarly publications – would imply. The stock type, a stereotype on stage, must be recognisable to the audience as such: a stereotype presumes a recognisable collective identity. Individuals, whether those we encounter in real life or those on stage, are identified by themselves and by others not only by their individual character but also by their membership of a group. Such collective identities are based on similarity – "collective identification evokes powerful imagery of people who are in some respect(s) apparently similar to each other" (Jenkins 2008 79). However, inclusion always entails exclusion too: "Similarity and difference reflect each other across a shared boundary. At the boundary we discover what we are in what we are not." (Jenkins 2008 79). While the rake was a recognisable stereotype or stock type, that stock type was surprisingly broad and vaguely defined. By staging rakes (and by extension, libertinism) on stage, the playwrights were actively engaged in defining a group of aristocratic men which could then be singled out as problematic.

The term "rake" was used to label a number of offenders against social customs and morals, as was libertinism. Libertinism is also hard to define because it has been approached from many different angles. Some scholars see it as a philosophy (Turner 1985, 2007, Webster 2005), others focus on the libertine as a social type (Chernaik 1995, Statt 1995, Mackie 2009). The traditional interpretation of libertinism sees the libertine as an "embodiment of social change and a solvent to some of the more repressive restraints of convention" or alternatively as expressing an "evolving secular rationalism"

which became the "facet of Enlightenment changes" (see for example Statt 1995 180). The libertine, from this point of view, was a progressive type. In the wake of gender studies (including men studies and queer studies) libertinism has come to be regarded as a backward-looking trend, an aspect of a traditional courtly and aristocratic system of values which had come under pressure by the developing ideal of domesticity (see for example Fletcher 1999, King 2004, McKeon 2005, Mackie 2009). The third possibility is to see libertinism as representative of an ambiguity between progressive and traditional trends (as Webster 2005 does, for example).

Underwood provided important groundwork towards a definition of the philosophy of libertinism and observed that "[a]t least three philosophic lines of thought are involved: Epicureanism, scepticism, and a type of primitivism or naturalism for which unfortunately there is no other received name" (Underwood 1957 13-14). Although libertines made use of contemporary philosophy where it suited their aims, their focus was the perpetuation of ancient aristocratic masculine privilege that was established based older concepts. This privilege allowed them to disregard the feelings and sensibilities of those below them. While the law curbed their actions to some extent (see chapter 2) they could still, occasionally, get away with murder (below or chapter 6). The rake tried to hold on to the privileges that the old patriarchal system gave him while at the same time using the framework of fraternal patriarchy, that privileged more equal relationships between men of the same class and placed less authority on the father, to disregard social conventions (see chapter 2). This was a characteristic they often shared with the fop. In the figure of the rake, uneasiness with aristocratic liberties could be expressed, which were often considered equal with libertinism. Libertinism can thus be seen as an indefinable conglomerate of masculine aristocratic values. Depending on the playwright these were framed as positive (e.g. Etherege and Wycherley), as ambivalent (e.g. Behn and Crowne) or problematic (e.g. Cibber, Vanbrugh and Johnson).

James Turner's definition of libertinism incorporates the difficulty of definition. He defines libertinism as a set of paradoxes, a failed quest to combine rationality and sensuality. Libertines, according to Turner, were unable to reconcile intellectual brilliance, wit and passion (Turner 1989 71). In Turner's definition, wit and intellectual brilliance are thus just as central to the definition of libertinism as passion is. If his definition were universally applied, very few of the rake characters on stage after the 1680s could be called libertines. After 1688, the rakes on stage were increasingly less witty, and it would be misleading to call a character like Loveless in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) "intellectually brilliant". Even before then, such characters were rare. If one narrows down the definition in such a way, only a small number of male figures on stage would be left, among them Rodophil and Palamede in Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671), Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), Willmore in Behn's *The Rover* (1677), Young Fashion in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696),

Sir Harry Wildair in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699) and Millamant in Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700). Characters such as Sir Frederick Frollic in Etherege's *Comical Revenge* (1664), Shadwell's Don John in *The Libertine* (1675), Cibber's Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) and others who are clearly framed as rakes would be excluded.

Chernaik's explanation for the allure of libertinism (Chernaik 1995) stresses other aspects: "Libertinism embodies a dream of human freedom, recognized from the outset both as infinitely desirable and as unattainable, a magical power enabling one to overcome a sense of alienation and helplessness" (Chernaik 1995 1). This description might be too favourable (he focused only on sexual freedom) but explains the appeal the rake continues to exert. Chernaik goes on to summarise that "[n]early all accounts of libertinism as an ideology stress restlessness, dissatisfaction or a sense of incompleteness as its defining characteristic. No one woman, no one conquest, can ever satisfy […]" (Chernaik 1995 2). These definitions are part of what Mackie (2009) and Barker-Benfield (1992) would rightly call too glorifying. The libertine here is characterised in Steele's (1709/1987) vein: he is an intellectually brilliant man with ideas beyond the scope of his time, and is pathologically restless. This definition leaves out class almost entirely, although it is evident that only a man with sufficient leisure could even have the dream of unattainable freedom. A libertine lifestyle was always a way to perform class privileges.

The libertine, when thus defined, is elevated above the ranks of merely debauched men bent on pleasure. Webster agrees in the context of the Court Wits of Charles II's court that he analyses and maintains that those libertines did more than just fooling around. Their performances were "an effort to participate in the continuing negotiations of the larger political and cultural settlement that followed the restoration" (Webster 2005 19). It is, therefore, no coincidence that the performances of the Court Wits thrived between the Restoration in 1660 and the Exclusion Crisis of the late 1670s. At the end of the 1660s they had been thwarted in their efforts to yield political power, so they aspired to change society in other ways, namely in the conscious public performance of outrageous acts (Webster 2005 19-20). While their strategies might not have worked against Charles, their class achieved their ultimate goal: political power (see chapter 2). The beneift of Webster's definition (2005) is that it demonstrates how class performance and gender performance are inextricably linked.

To come closer to a definition of the type, the etymology of the terms he is usually described in can provide further material. It seems to be the norm in scholarly discourse to talk about "libertines" when discussing historical figures and "rakes" (or "rake-heroes") when talking about literary (or other artistic) representations of this type. During the Restoration and the early 18th century, however, this distinction was not made. The etymology of the terms suggests an altogether different distinction.

"Libertine" had a wider meaning than "rake" and originally meant a "freedman" (this meaning dates back to 1323 in England and is still found in 1727 according to the OED). In the 16th century, it denoted members of an antinomian sect, which originated in France, a meaning that soon broadened into "free-thinker". The term "libertinism" was thus used as early as 1563 in England to denote disregard for religious authority and religion. In Elizabethan times, the term "libertine" was used as roughly equal to "atheist" (Heinrich 1999 3). "Libertine" could also mean a man "not restrained by moral law, esp. in his relations with the female sex" as early as 1593. The OED lists 1611 as the first time that "libertinism" was used in the sense "disregard of moral restraint, esp. in relation between the sexes" (OED). The development of the term "libertine" thus highlights the close connection between atheism and amorality. "Rake", on the other hand, derived from "rakehell", a folk-etymology for Middle-English "rakel", which can be traced to the Old Norse word "reikall". "Rake-hell" in the sense of "an immoral or dissolute person" is first recorded 1560 and remained a common term in the 18th century (OED). The earliest occurrence of the shortened form "rake" is recorded for 1687 in the OED in the sense of "a fashionable or stylish man of dissolute or promiscuous habit." Rake is the term that Steele uses in his defence of the type in the *Tatler* (Steele 1709/1987, see above).

Originally the term "libertine" thus supposed some form of philosophical thought and a minimum of education behind the practice while "rake" presupposed no philosophical justification for the practice, but both terms seem to have denoted upper-class men in the late 17th and early 18th century. In Johnson's dictionary, "rake" is defined more negatively than "libertine" as "a loose, disorderly, vicious, wild, thoughtless fellow" addicted to pleasure, while "libertine" was defined in terms of irreligion and licentiousness (Footnote 9 Statt 1995 181). Shadwell certainly did not make such a distinction in 1675 when he titled his version of the Don Juan story *The Libertine*. The libertine protagonist Don John had none of the refinement and wit of Dorimant (Etherege's *The Man of Mode* was written and staged 1676); Don John was a violent bully, who conquered women by force and not by wit.

A third term, one that is often used in character descriptions, is "debauch"; in Crowne's *City Politiques* from 1683, for example, both Florio and Artall are described as "a debauch". Both of them are what we would now call "rake-heroes". Cibber describes Loveless in the *dramatis personae* of *Love's Last Shift* (1696) as "of a debauched life". The term "debauch" entered English from French in the late 16th century. Its etymology is unclear, but the original meaning appears to be that of "to turn or lead away, entice, seduce", which soon became associated with "to seduce from virtue or morality" (OED). The "debauch" as a character was thus a seducer. In contrast to "libertine", "debauch" was hardly used with positive connotations, but again, it is not possible to distinguish a "debauch" from a "rake" or "libertine".

In conclusion, then, the rakes on stage, defined here as aristocratic males exhibiting potentially disruptive behaviour, were part of an ongoing discourse about the male elite of aristocrats. The borders between libertinism and acceptable behaviour are indefinable, as they very much depended on the individual author's position in a debate which allowed for a wide range of stances. The following sections will analyse specific aspects of male behaviour among rakish characters on and off stage and attempt to establish broad trends in their depiction.

Libertinism off stage

Connell defined the hegemonic man in the late 17th and early 18th century as belonging to the class of hereditary landowners and as "emphatic and violent", reliant on a code of honour, violent towards the agricultural workforce and as possessing "licence in sexual relationships" (Connell 1995 190). In short, her definition of the hegemonic man in the 18th century is a libertine, even though she does not call him such. She recognises that this man was gradually superseded by the "men of the bourgeoisie" and their norms and ethics (ibid). Connell's sketch of the historical development of "hegemonic masculinity" is simplified, but her observation here is shared in many studies (Fletcher 1999, Shepard 2005, French/Rothery 2012 and others).

The common conflation of sexuality and libertinism can lead to a favourable view of libertinism. Statt warns that "(t)he libertine whose social rebellion consisted solely of flouting received sexual mores and practising a form of relatively egalitarian, if Machiavellian, sexual politics was perhaps more a literary and social convention than a historical figure" (Statt 1995 181). Statt underestimates the literary convention; in the plays of the Restoration and the early 18th century the rake cannot be reduced to flouting sexual mores and practising Machiavellian sexual politics. An understanding of the contemporary phenomenon of libertinism and its social significance can illuminate the shadows of the stage character who may seem flat but in whom complex contemporary concerns are mirrored. The rake on stage was considered to be an embodiment or mirror image of contemporary aristocratic men, explicitly so by Dryden. In his "Essay of Dramatic Poesy" he states of the dramatists Beaumont and Fletcher that "they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen […]; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done" (Dryden 1668a/1926a). Two aspects are noticeable in this quote: firstly, Dryden considers "wild debaucheries" and "wit" as part of the identity of a "gentleman"; secondly, he believes that this was already true during the Renaissance and not a new phenomenon in his own time and presumably finds the precursors to his own rakes in the Jacobean plays of Fletcher and Beaumont.

When Dryden dedicated his comedy *Marriage à la Mode* to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, he wrote that "And not only I, who pretend not to this way, but the best comic writers of our age, will join with

me to acknowledge, that they have copied the gallantries of courts, the delicacy of expression, and the decencies of behaviour, from your lordship, with more success, than if they had taken their models from the court of France" (Dryden 1671/2001 3). As this was the dedication to a play, a eulogy for a prospective patron, this was not intended to be an accurate portrait. Even for a dedication it was, however, a remarkable compliment to credit the dedicatee as providing a model for the stage. Dryden was not the only one to consider the rakes on stage to be reflections of actual customs, as numerous prologues and epilogues show, such as Cibber's epilogue to *Love's Last Shift* (1696). About thirty years after Dryden's dedication to Rochester, in 1717, Christopher Bullock dedicated his play *Woman is a Riddle* to the famously dissolute rake and brilliant orator Philip, 2nd Marquess of Wharton (later 1st Duke of Wharton). He avoided a direct description by claiming that his talent was insufficient to capture the Marquess. The times had changed and Bullock could not claim that the Marquess's dissolute behaviour inspired the dissolute figures in his plays.

The most prominent Restoration libertines, often called the Court Wits, were an elite circle of men in the court of Charles II. John Harold Wilson's *The Court Wits of the Restoration: An Introduction* (1948) was the first serious study of this circle, in which Wilson established the Court Wits as a school of like-minded individuals. Webster describes them as "a coterie of artistic […], political […], and social figures […], who craved the importance and power that accompanied fame" (Webster 2005 10-11). One figure stands out among the others: John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester (1647-1680) (see Dryden above). Rochester was seen by his contemporaries, such as Dryden, as the archetypical libertine at Charles II's court. Other comic writers copied Rochester, most famously George Etherege in *The Man of Mode* of 1676: its rake-hero Dorimant was generally assumed to be a copy of Rochester (see e.g. Farley-Hills 1978 14, Rosenfeld 2008 148). As Dorimant was in turn the archetypical rake-hero (see below), Rochester left his mark on the figure, perhaps more so than Dryden could have predicted.

Barker-Benfield's description of Rochester also defines him as a model for a new style of (aristocratic) masculinity: "Rochester symbolizes a new kind of man, the leader of a new, postwar generation. To the older Earl of Clarendon, this generation 'affected' a manly style of 'apparent hardness.' Fortified by the new philosophy, 'every man is unshaken at those Tales, at which his Ancestors trembled'" (Barker-Benfield 1992 38). By "those Tales" Clarendon meant the Bible. This hints, of course, at the atheism that was fashionable at the court at the time (see below). Clarendon's words are also an echo of complaints of older men all over the world. There was no clear break between Rochester's ideology and that of Clarendon's contemporaries, particularly since one of the leaders of the Court Wits, the 2nd Duke of Buckingham, belonged to the same generation as Clarendon, but the philosophy had changed and, as outlined in chapter 2, with them the dominant ideologies and form of

patriarchy. The behaviour of Rochester and his friends was outrageous but based on old privileges and principles.

Rochester died in 1680 on the eve of the Exclusion Crisis. The era of the Court Wits was over by this time, but that did not mean that libertine behaviour among aristocratic men, especially young men, faded. Thomas Wharton, 1st Marquess of Wharton, (1648-1715) and his son Philip Wharton, 1st Duke of Wharton (1698-1731), are of note. Thomas Wharton was born into a wealthy family of dissenters. While he had a strict upbringing, he later became famous for his debaucheries. The most notable incident occurred in 1682. Together with a group of friends he broke into the church of Great Barrington, Gloucestershire, while drunk and then relieved himself in the pulpit and on the communion table, before they were chased off by a crowd of angry villagers. Wharton later wrote a letter of apology to the bishop before official action was taken and the apology was apparently accepted (Clark 2004a §19). In 1705, when he was one of the most influential politicians in the country, he was silenced in a debate on Church matters in the House of Lords by Thomas Osborne, 1st Duke of Leeds, who referred to the story (Clark 2004a ONB §21). He retained his reputation of being void of moral and religious principles (Somerset 2012 197), especially among the Tories. In a 1711 article in the *Examiner* Jonathan Swift moved the story to Gloucester Cathedral making Wharton's transgression appear even graver (Clark 2004a §21). In Richardson's novel, *Clarissa* (1748), the rake Lovelace's friends compare him to "old Tom Wharton" (Richardson 2004 214). The Tory Richardson still used the story as a barb against the Whigs at the end of the 1740s, although it is apparent that due to the privilege afforded to aristocratic young men, the episode never seriously harmed his reputation or his career. Sir Ralph Verney, quoted in the ONB entry on Thomas Wharton, voiced what was presumably the prevalent Whig attitude to Wharton's excesses: "I am confident that he will serve the King and the country faithfully, though he is wild enough in drink and I am troubled at it, but who lives without great faults?" (Clark 2004a §21).

Thomas Wharton's son Philip, 1st Duke of Wharton, was a powerful Jacobite politician and one of the most gifted political speakers and writers of his time. And one of its most infamous libertines. He was associated with the first "Hellfire Club" which was said to have existed from 1719 to 1723. The club was rumoured to celebrate orgies in honour of Satan. The club might or might not have existed, and it is apparent that there were political reasons for the allegations (Smith, who wrote the ONB entry on Wharton, is convinced the story is true, see §5. Evelyn Lord, on the other hand, is doubtful, see Lord 2008 xx. See also Ashe 2005 on the Hellfire Clubs). Philip Wharton's general behaviour seemed to have made the story believable. And the Hellfire Club was not the only rakish club which was rumoured to exist:

> The first contemporary reference to the Hell-Fire Club is in Mist's Weekly Journal of 20 February 1720. The article describes two clubs, the Bold Bucks and the Hell-Fires. The Bold Bucks, the journal claimed, attempted sex with all females of their species, no matter what age, and even with their own sisters. The Hell-Fires aimed at a more transcendent Malignity: deriding the Forms of Religion as a Trifle […] [the article] identifies their leader as "the unfortunate Lord Dapper, [the Duke of Wharton] whose name no longer has any reputation as it did in the days of his father." (Lord 2008 52)

The last line strongly indicates the political dimension of the scandal. In contrast to his father, Philip Wharton dedicated his considerable political talents to the cause of the Tories (and, increasingly overtly, the Jacobites). Accusations of libertinism were flung at members of the opposing party, but Thomas and Philip Wharton prove that libertinism and scandalous behaviour could be found on both political sides.

Another example of the manner in which the privileged status of peers could protect them from any serious consequences is Charles Mohun, Fourth Baron Mohun, a notorious duellist. Shortly after his majority he received a royal pardon from King William III when he killed an officer in a street fight. A few years earlier he was acquitted of the charge of murder of the actor Mountfort by the House of Lords (Stater 1999 62). This virtual exemption from punishment extended to the sons of peers too. Edward Montagu, Viscount Hinchingbrooke and son of the 3rd Earl of Sandwich, was arrested in 1712 for his involvement in the Mohock incident (see chapter 6). In 1713 he was elected as a member of the House of Commons for Huntingdon, an office he held until his death in 1722, predeceasing his father. Along with Hinchingbrooke, two young men of the lower gentry were arrested (one the son of a lawyer, the other the son of a knight) in connection to the Mohock incident, but were also acquitted (Statt 188). While those young men outraged the public and certainly some of their own class, their status seemed to protect them from further harm. Something all those events have in common, however, was that the offences were committed when they were still young men.

Statt concludes that "[t]here is considerable evidence that the life of violent libertinism formed a part of the social conditioning of at least a segment of the male members of the upper classes, though it would probably be an exaggeration to call rakery an apprenticeship for the beau mondain" (Statt 1995 198). (See more on violence in chapter 6). This might be an exaggeration, but if it was not required as an "apprenticeship", it is evident that rakery/libertinism was a common part of aristocratic masculinity. It is also evident that there was widespread concern about the behaviour of aristocratic men which was expressed in several ways, from satires in the 17th century and journal articles spreading rumours in the 18th century. The comedies were a consistent part of this discourse voicing and negotiating concerns about disruptive behaviour among the male elite. That is not to say that all men of the aristocracy behaved in problematically rakish ways, but it meant that the privilege afforded

to their class and gender and the tradition they followed encouraged aristocratic men to flaunt morality and the law without fearing many consequences either legally or for their social and political standing.

Steele, the great reformer of manners, defended the rake in the *Tatler*, the journal that he usually used to discourage vice. On 11 June 1709 he wrote in the *Tatler* No. 27 that "[a] Rake is a Man always to be pitied; and if he lives is one Day certainly reclaim'd; for his Faults proceed not from Choice or Inclination, but from strong Passions and Appetites, which are in Youth too violent for the Curb of Reason, good Sense, good Manners, and good Nature" (Steele 1709/1987 206). The footnote in Bond's edition of the *Tatler* reveals that Steele was presumed to have written so favourably of the rake because he, too, had been a rake. The fact that even Richard Steele was at some point part of rakish culture demonstrates how widespread and deep-rooted the fashion was. In Susanna Centlivre's play *The Busie Body*, also from 1709, an exchange between Charles and his hypocritical father, Sir Francis, is telling:

> Sir Francis: […] these young Fellows think old
> Men get Estates for nothing but them to
> squander away, in Dicing, Wenching, Drink-
> ing, Dressing, and so forth.
> Charles: I think I was born a Gentleman, Sir; I'm
> sure my Uncle bred me like one.
> Sir Francis. From which you wou'd infer, Sir, that
> Gambling, Whoring, and the Pox, are Requisits
> to a Gentleman. (II.i.109-116)

Sir Francis, who considers all young gentlemen to be rakes, is too self-absorbed to acknowledge individual differences between them. His son Charles has done nothing to earn those reproaches. It is merely Sir Francis's conviction that every young gentleman is a rake and thus his son must be one too. As will be further discussed in chapter 6, young gentlemen had a long history of disturbing the peace. However, in Centlivre's play, she pokes fun at this assumption and makes it appear that Sir Francis speaks about his own youth and the customs then, while modern young men, like Charles, often behaved better.

Despite hints that rakish behaviour had to some extent always been common among young aristocratic men (see above and chapter 6), it was also seen as something new and threatening. The English philosopher whom contemporaries frequently blamed for libertinism (if they did not blame French culture) was Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes himself appears not to have been a libertine in practice (Mintz 1962 19), yet contemporaries perceived Hobbes's philosophy as corrupt and dangerous. Libertinism and Hobbes's philosophy became interlinked. "By 1666 fear, rather like the plague, was catching, and nothing was more frightening than so-called Hobbism" (Tilmouth 2007 257). The connection between Hobbes and libertinism was only strengthened when Rochester, the famous libertine, supposedly denounced Hobbes on his deathbed and swore that only the Bible contained the

truth. The event was recorded by Bishop Gilbert Burnet who was present at Rochester's deathbed and who likely either invented this incident or suggested the denunciation of Hobbes to Rochester (Barker-Benfield 1992 43). Burnet's anectdote is one of many examples of how Hobbes was fervently attacked in his lifetime and beyond for being an atheist (Mintz 1962 14). Hobbes believed in a god or deity but this god was indifferent to the affairs of man and morality had nothing to do with divine judgment (Chernaik 1995 28). The majority of Christians and especially of clerics perceived no difference between those sentiments and the outright rejection of any deity. At the court of Charles II this atheism in the Hobbesian vein was fashionable among the Court Wits and the large number of pamphlets against libertine principles and especially libertine atheism testifies that such views were widely regarded as dangerous and in these pamphlets the "demonised figure of Hobbes" was usually associated with libertinism (Chernaik 1995 22). Perhaps the starkest example for this is Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Part of the fallen Angels in the newly created Hell are described as philosophers:

> Others apart sat on a hill retired
> In thoughts more elevate and reasoned high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wand'ring mazes lost.
> Of good and evil much they argued then,
> Of happiness and final misery,
> Passion and apathy, glory and shame:
> Vain wisdom all and false philosophy!
> (II.557-565)

Milton's target is clear: the Enlightenment philosophers, and especially Hobbes, who had elevated thoughts and who, without faith in God, became lost in mazes. Two other important figures for those adhering to a libertine school of philosophy were the ancient philosopher Lucretius and the early 17th-century French philosopher Pierre Gassendi, who founded the Neo-Epicurean school (Novak 2008 55). In Lucretius's famous poem "De rerum natura" (which was a favourite of figures such as the Earl of Rochester and Dryden) he denies the existence of avenging or rewarding gods and develops a rational, materialistic understanding of nature (Heinrich 1999 3, footnote 7). Rochester, a libertine as well as poet, picked up on their philosophical ideas in his poem "Satyr against Reason and Mankind" (Wilmot 1962), which condemns the abstract nature of reason and claims that the "right" intellect serves the animal senses (Turner 1989 71). However, in reality, Libertines made only eclectic use of philosophy; Christopher Tilmouth talks of a "philosophic landscape" and "shared premises" rather than a direct debt (Tilmouth 2007 316, see also Chernaik 1995 22).

Rakes in the comedy seldom engaged in philosophical debates and, in 1696, Cibber did not suppose that any rake was a philosopher, either on stage or in the audience. In his epilogue to *Love's Last Shift*, he addressed the rakes as "To you whose sole Religion's Drinking,/ Whoring, Roaring, without the Pain

of Thinking" (9-10). Cibber implies that the rakes are atheists, but atheists of a more casual kind than those in the Hobbesian vein. This also describes most rakes on stage, with a few exceptions, most notably in Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675). That play starts out by Don John, Don Antonio and Don Lopez elaborating on their philosophy. A more direct reference to Hobbes in a comedy is Vizard's admiration of "Hobbs" in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699). Vizard is not actually the rake character in the play; he is described in the *dramatis personae* as "outwardly pious, otherwise a great Debauchee, and villanous [sic]". A typical rake would not pretend to be anything else than what he is. In the very first scene of the play Vizard pulls out a book and reads while walking about (a scene that is similar to the first scene in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), where we find Loveless reading, and Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695) in which Valentine is reading). His uncle, Smuggler, comes into the room and remarks that Vizard is surely reading "pious Ejaculations" (I.i.25-26). In the next line Vizard, however, remarks to himself "This *Hobbs* is an excellent Fellow!" His uncle tells him that it was a miracle to see "A Man at his Devotion so near the Court - I'm/ very glad Boy, that you keep Sanctity untainted in this/ infectious place; the very Air of this Park is heathenish, and/ every Man's Breath I meet scents of Atheism" (I.i.32-35). The most obvious irony in this interchange is the fact that Vizard has just praised the "atheist" philosopher Hobbes. Vizard's appreciation of Hobbes in line 27 of the play categorises him as a "villain" and makes Sir Harry Wildair appear much more positive in contrast. Wildair might have questionable morals at the beginning of the play, but he does not embrace a morally questionably philosopher.

Atheism among men was a concern Richard Allestree voiced in 1673 in his enduringly popular conduct book *The Ladies Calling*. Allestree's concern was that he had failed to impress the need for a religious life on "the more impregnable, masculine part of the gentry" (Allestree 1673 2) in *The Whole Duty of Man* (1658)[6]. He claimed that he thus addressed himself to women now in the hope that they would be more receptive to religious ideals. Bishop William Fleetwood voiced similar ideas in *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (1705) and of course Richardson had similar purposes in mind with his novels *Pamela* (1640) and *Clarissa* (1747-48). On the other hand, the topic of religion was avoided on stage and the figure of the rake was not exempt – few rakes are open atheists. A positive representation of an atheist hero would have been impossible to stage and the reformation of an atheist into a believer would have been a different genre all together, although it is most likely implied in reformations such as Loveless's in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). The most outspoken atheist in the plays discussed here was Don John in Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675), which is not, strictly speaking, a comedy and in which Don John is dragged into hell by devils when the play ends. However, the play in some ways reaffirms Don John's philosophy that a man is a

[6] Note that both works were published anonymously and Allestree's authorship cannot be confirmed

brutal beast by nature. His servant Jacomo spends much of the play admonishing his master and recounting his sins. Jacomo claims that he only stays with Don John because he is scared of what would happen if he tried to leave him. However, when he is left alone with an unconscious woman, Leonora, he attempts to rape her as he declares "I dare sin in private" (I.i.215). A more harmless atheist than Don John is Young Fashion in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696). He cheerfully describes himself as an atheist and Jacobite. Other than using these labels he does not, however, make any blasphemous statements. He is also possibly the most moral of all the men in the play and Vanbrugh probably inserted Young Fashion's claim to atheism to reveal the bigotry of those who called themselves Christians but failed to follow Christian morals. Young Fashion was mocking bigots rather than proclaiming himself a convinced atheist. In most comedies, characters do not discuss religion; they go to Church but mainly to look at other people and, occasionally, they rail at Catholics. While loose morals were often attributed to an equally loose religion in contemporary texts, playwrights shied away from the presentation of actual atheistic rakes on stage; characters that had at least the potential to reform at the end of the play were not portrayed as atheists at any stage of the play. At the end of the play, a patriarchal, Christian society was upheld (or shown not to exist, as in Vanbrugh's case).

Webster's thesis that "public performance of transgressive activities was at the heart of what it meant to be a libertine" (Webster 2005 3-4) is illustrated by an episode involving Sir Charles Sedley, a member of the Court Wits. In 1663 Sedley dined at an inn with two friends. During their stay there, Sedley went on the balcony, took his clothes off, mimicked a sexual act and blasphemed (Webster 2005 3-4). As he may have planned, this event caused public outrage. Why he did it is a trickier question. Webster believes that Sedley had a political agenda, and that the Court Wits had an intuitive grasp on the concept which Michel Foucault would formulate in the 20th century: "the pleasure that comes of exercising power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, and brings to light" (Webster 2005 18). It was not a political power that Sedley exhibited, but a cultural one, a claim to hegemony. As an aristocrat he could take liberties, which his audience could not. From this position of privilege he challenged both religion (combined with morality) and the monarchy. On the stage the rakes did not generally go this far; they blasphemed very rarely and could certainly not expose themselves. In Behn's play *The Lucky Chance* (1683) one of the elderly aldermen exposes himself to two women, and this scene apparently caused outrage (Behn's prologue to the play). Part of the anxiety audiences had about rakes was tied to events such as these. The taming and reforming of the rake thus also silenced his challenge to the existing system without taking away his privilege, which was part of this system. The rake embodied all the traits which were perceived as threatening and which had to be purged not only for the happy ending of the play but also for the future of the nation.

In Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) we never learn why Loveless was originally "forc'd to leave the kingdom". It is unlikely that Cibber lost too much thought over the reason, but it seems that he carefully picked the year. The play premiered in January 1696 (1695 according to the contemporary calendar). If we presume that the play is set at the same time (and there is no hint to the contrary) and count back to the time when Loveless left England, he must have left shortly before the Glorious Revolution in 1688. A confirmed rake leaving England just before the Glorious Revolution is, if nothing else, symbolic. It also means, however, that Loveless had been on the continent at the same time that James II was newly banished there and might well have met him. In the middle of the play a scene is set in St. James's Park (Cibber 1696 II.iii.). The description states: "The scene changes to St. James's Park. Enter Young Worthy and Loveless as from the Tavern". The tavern they have been to must have been The Blue Posts, where Young Worthy proposed to meet Loveless in the evening when they parted in Act I. Both Sullivan and Viator/Burling, who edited this play, assume it to be a popular tavern in Haymarket, which was close to St. James's Park, where the scene takes place. Sullivan points out that there was another tavern by the same name in Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, which was the resort of Jacobites and a few months after the play's premiere a plot to assassinate William III was discovered there. While it is unlikely to have been the tavern Young Worthy suggested, all these aspects together strongly suggest a connection between Loveless and political unrest.[7]

Young Worthy's equivalent Young Fashion in Vanbrugh's response *The Relapse* (1696) is more problematic. As discussed above, he is connected to the Jacobite cause and identifies as an atheist soon after his first appearance on stage (I.ii.56-58). Young Fashion intends to join the army despite being a Jacobite and declares that the strength of his conscience depends on his purse (I.ii.61-63). Those attributes hardly recommended him to the audience. Yet he is certainly more engaging than Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* – Young Fashion has wit, he shows responsibility towards his servant, and before he betrays his brother, he swallows his pride and appeals to his brother for money. Although his convictions are problematic, they seem to be rather casual and non-threatening. Among the many threats Vanbrugh points to the stability of society in his play, and the conviction that the king is not rightfully king of England is a relatively minor one.

Young Worthy and Young Fashion both also embody another common issue for aristocrats, especially younger brothers: a lack of funds. Young Worthy in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* is not as reckless as Loveless and more practically minded. He does not ask Loveless, who has returned from a lengthy stay on the continent, about his pleasures abroad; he rather inquires how Loveless has improved his

[7] In Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1697) Lord John Brute and his friends Lord Rake and Colonel Bully also visit The Blue Posts tavern in III.ii, indicating a connection between the tavern and the darker side of libertinism in the mid-1690s.

fortune, to which Loveless replies that he has gained sexual experience and wit (I.i.87-92). Next to his servant and his friend, Loveless comes across as a petulant child, who stubbornly insists that sexual experience and wit are more valuable than money even when he is not even able to provide himself and his servant with food and shelter. Young Worthy argues with Loveless about the latter's wasteful habits:

> *Y.Wor*. Faith, Ned, I'm as much in Love with Wickedness as thou canst be, but I'm for having it at a cheaper Rate than my ruine! (I.i.118-120)

Young Worthy has managed to squander his inheritance of 2000 pounds (I.i.140); yet his concern with money now seems to reflect that in contrast to Loveless he has been capable of learning from his experiences. However, even before he wasted the entirety of his money, Young Worthy had invested a third of his 2000 pounds in a place at court, securing his social position (I.i.139).[8] Loveless, we may assume, never possessed this foresight. Young Worthy's intention not to remain a burden to his generous brother is a truly worthy thought (I.i.142), but behind it might also lie the fear that his brother might die before him and leave a son who might not feel responsible for sponsoring his uncle's wasteful lifestyle. He now possesses restraint and forethought – attributes that suited a man at court (which was often the first step to a political career) and showed his progress towards a desirable hegemonic model of masculinity.

Love's Last Shift demonstrates, how the economic climate undercut notions of aristocratic privilege. Chernaik connects the "predatory" nature of libertine sex with economics, which he in turn connects with Hobbesian thought:

> C.B. Macpherson has argued persuasively that the Hobbesian competitive model of man, so influential in the later seventeenth century, reflected the economic organisation of a society in which outmoded aristocratic ideals of responsibility, magnanimity and service were being supplanted by a cash nexus which eroded distinctions and overrode human ties. (Chernaik 1995 4)

Arguably, Chernaik (and Macpherson's) view of the period is tainted by their 20th century ideology; the erosion of distinctions was a slow process. It was, however, one that was felt keenly in the comedies. Many aristocrats found themselves in dependent positions. They might have been dependent on the king for positions at court or on money lenders to finance their lavish displays of power (see chapter 2). Such figures made compelling protagonists who had clear motivations and goals. The most common plot in the comedy is that of a young rake with financial troubles wooing a witty young lady who just so happens to be an heiress. To mention just a few: Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), Behn's *The Rover* (1677), Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685), Shadwell's *The Squire of*

[8] The salary for this position would have been barely enough to cover his expenses, but it was an important first step in his career.

Alsatia (1688), Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), Congreve's *The Way of the Worl*d (1700), Mary Pix's *The Beau Defeated* (1700), Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707) and Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1717). The power of seduction and the rake's wit secure not only the rake's social standing but also his financial security. When those rakes finally marry their reasons are always to a considerable extent mercenary. Young Worthy and Young Fashion are both rakes who use deceit without remorse to achieve this aim. The prototype of a polite gentleman, Young Clerimont, in Pix's *The Beau Defeated* (1700) considers himself above such stratagems:

> What will become of me? Must I wait at proud
> men's doors and cringe for an admittance? Can I
> flatter the puffed-up lord and fawn for a vile office?
> Debase my immortal soul to feed this molding clay?
> 'Tis impossible, 'tis more than man can bear!
> (II.i.104-107)

Pix's play formulates a perspective which undercuts the masculinity and indeed aristocracy of Young Worthy and Young Fashion. While Cibber and Vanbrugh presumably considered their characters masculine (Young Worthy and Young Fashion are the most positive characters in their respective plays) they fall short of the standard Young Clerimont sets only four years later. Moments after this reflection, Young Clerimont rejects the money Lady Landworth has sent him. However, Pix offers no solution for a young aristocrat such as Clerimont to regain his estate without machinations. He remains curiously passive throughout the play, while his cousin Mrs. Clerimont secures the estate his father promised him from his brother and arranges his marriage with Lady Landworth.

The history of the rake on stage

As mentioned above, the rake is a quintessential Restoration character; however, the difficulty in defining libertinism makes it problematic to present the history of the rake, the theatrical embodiment of libertinism, on stage. The exact time when the rake, as a stock type, first entered the stage is impossible to pinpoint. The figure developed slowly at the beginning of the Restoration along with the ideas of the libertine circle at court. While the previous section of this chapter and the following chapters often discuss the comedies non-chronologically, this section provides a chronological overview of the development of the rake.

A good starting point is Howard's *The Committee* (1662). Its two main protagonists can be seen as predecessors of the rake. The play was set during the Interregnum and features two "rakish Cavalier soldiers who refuse to trade their political and religious principles for land" (Nixon 2001 472). The appellation "rakish" by Nixon is premature, as both Colonel Blunt and Colonel Careless are two positive figures among the devious and emasculated Puritan committee members and in any later play would

not be labelled "rakish" by anyone. They are not notable for their wit or intrigues, nor are they particularly amoral. Ruth, one of the female protagonists, labels Careless's behaviour as "idle looseness" (III.iv.171). They win their land back not by their machinations but by having caught the eye of two witty women in a position to help them, Ruth and Arbella [sic]. While the play celebrates the victory over the Puritans, it also plainly shows that the cavaliers could not establish their hegemony based on their manly virtues and deeds. This reflected the recent experience that the cavaliers had not been able to overthrow the usurpers by military force. They were the more attractive alternative to Puritans, but not the more powerful, a fact that Howard subtly points out in his plot as a criticism and perhaps as a challenge to the returned aristocrats.

Etherege's first play *The Comical Revenge; or*, *Love in a Tub,*[9] which was staged in 1664, heralded the comedy of manners (see chapter 2). Samuel Pepys considered the play to be "very merry, but only so by gesture, not wit at all" (quoted by Wilson, 1948 150). The plot structure was typical of the tragicomedy made famous by Dryden later on: while the first plot involved love and honour and was written in heroic couplets, the second plot revolves around a rake, Sir Frederick Frollick, and a widow, Mrs. Rich. When Sir Frederick appears on stage, we learn that the night before he beat his servant while he drunk (for which he magnanimously apologises). Shortly later we learn that in the same night he knocked at the door of a friend's mistress and loudly denounced her as a whore when she did not open it. Those antics are not staged, but recounted in I.ii, as was typical of all plays. The most problematic behaviour was never shown, even with negative characters (see Shadwell's *The Scowrers*, 1691, or Charles Johnson's *The Masquerade*, 1719). Sir Frederick thus establishes his superiority over the lower classes and women from the first moment he appears on stage. He is also, like most comedy heroes, bankrupt and financially dependent on others. He eventually solves his financial problems by marrying Mrs. Rich. The royalist hero, Bruce, is not a rake and his rival, Beaufort, is described as a former rake who was reformed by his love for Graciana. Despite Sir Frederick's generally indulgent portrayal, this manner of flaunting aristocratic privilege is portrayed as being in need of reform as early as in 1664 by an author close to the Court Wits.

Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode*, which was in all likelihood first staged in 1671 (Corman 2001 330), features two rakes similar to Sir Frederick. Like *The Comical Revenge* (Etherege 1664), it is a tragicomedy. Brian Corman observes the significance of the split-plot structure: "*Marriage à la Mode* is the quintessential Restoration split-plot tragedy [...]. The comic plot is one of private life, the heroic of the public world of politics and statecraft." (Corman 2001 330) In relation to the portrayal of the two rake-heroes, Rodophil and Palamede, this structure allows Dryden to portray them as both sexually

[9] I give the second title here because it is frequently referenced as "Love in a Tub" even in scholarly literature.

immoral (they cuckold each other) as well as valiant in battle, when they successfully fight to reinstate their lost king, Leonidas. The combination of those qualities allowed for a portrayal of the rake as a positive masculine figure, who establishes his hegemony by his valour and his sexual prowess, even though the latter has to be reined in to allow these men to live peacefully with each other. The play thus acknowledges the problematic nature of the rakes' sexual morals, but also assures the audience that they are loyal to their king and ready to defend king and country; licentiousness was thus portrayed as a natural part of aristocratic men which did not diminish their honour or their ability to govern.

In the same year (1671), Wycherley's first play, *Love in a Wood* premiered. "Ranger," a rake, ranges in St. James's park, searching for new conquests, while he tries to keep his kept mistress, Lydia, confined at home. Ranger and his friends Vincent and Valentine are described as "young gentlemen of the town" in the *dramatis personae*. As described above, this description fitted most rakes. Apart from his problematic dealings with women, he is portrayed as a good and popular friend to other men, and his honesty contrasts with the bigotry of the Puritan Alderman Gripe. However, there are parallels between Gripe and Ranger: while Ranger tries to keep his mistress locked away, Gripe locks up his daughter, Martha, while he secretly tries to engage in an affair with Lucy. At the end of the play Ranger vows fidelity to Lydia and claims that "the end of marriage, now is liberty/ and two are bound – to set each other free" (V.ii.113-114). Like in *Marriage à la Mode*, the rake is only mildly problematic and no threat to social order. Both plays seem to be part of a discourse of justifying libertinism as the new form of hegemonic masculinity, portraying the rakes as passionate men who will find the right way.

In Wycherley's later comedy, *The Country Wife* (1675), the rake Horner is purely driven by his sexual desires and tries to abandon the company of other men completely. The entire play is fuelled by an obsession with cuckolding. Horner pretends to be impotent and endures mockery from all other men for the prize of gaining easier access to women. Mr. Pinchwife is a "whoremaster" (I.i.404) and has become a ridiculously jealous husband because he suspects every man of having designs on his wife. Due to his excessive jealousy, he is the only one who does not fall for Horner's ruse. Harcourt and Dorilant, the two most positive figures, share some of the libertine rhetoric but do not act on it on stage. The ubiquity of these libertine values thus permeates the play, but it is also a warning that to overdo it is to become like Horner or Pinchwife. The play is more critical of libertinism than *Love in a Wood* and an attempt to establish a more moderate and modified form of libertinism as the normative masculinity. Figures like Horner or Pinchwife had no interest in bringing stability and maintaining the patriarchal system: both were too short-sighted to acknowledge the need for societal structures.

In 1675 Shadwell's *The Libertine* also premiered and enjoyed great success. In the prologue Shadwell called it "the most irregular play upon the stage" (Prologue 15). *The Libertine* is a very dark

play. In this variation on the Don Juan story, Don John and his two friends Don Lopez and Don Antonio wreak havoc all over Spain: they rape, they steal from churches and they murder without any remorse. Weinstein remarks that "Shadwell presents us with a monster" while the French plays Shadwell adapted preserved some more "tact" (Weinstein 1959 35). At the end of the play, order is to some extent restored. The ending does not include a wedding. Instead, a still unrepentant Don John and his friends are dragged to hell by devils. No traditional institution could stop the libertine onslaught; divine intervention is needed. This play counters the indulgent portrayals of the rake in previous plays. The libertines are not only casually ageist, they literally murder their fathers, they are not merely sexually licentious, they rape women, having divested themselves of the necessity for seduction by using the same philosophy that was popular at court. Libertinism is portrayed as a direct threat to society and its increasing popularity and aspiration to hegemonic masculinity as an imminent danger.

Nine months later Etherege's most famous play, *The Man of Mode*, premiered. The name of the rake-hero, Dorimant, may be a hint to the Don Juan story: in 1659 a French playwright going by the name of Dorimon (or Dorimont) published *Le Festin de Pierre ou le Fils criminel*, *tragicomédie* (Weinstein 1959 25). However, Etherege, who is often numbered among the Court Wits (Webster 2005 10), wrote a thoroughly attractive rake-hero, who never engages in physical violence, rape or breach of promise. Dorimant is undoubtedly the most alluring of all the rakes on stage and his dazzling light obscures the less desirable contemporary rakes and leads critics to claim a universal allure and dominance of the rake which he never possessed. Hughes claims that Etherege's portrayal of Dorimant's 'sexual Machiavellianism' led to a darkening of the predominant character of comedies after 1676 and that the plays became more critical of faithless males and more pessimistic in their portrayal of sexuality after this peak of libertinism on stage (Hughes 1996 185).

One of the earliest reformed rakes features in a play staged just one year after this peak of rakish mastery: Tibullus in John Smith's *Cytherea* (1677). Tibullus, to quote David S. Berkely, "has been trying to seduce Mariana by waxing eloquently in the *carpe diem* vein" (Berkely 1952 226) until Mariana answers his question "will nothing move?" with "Yes – if you banish lust and sue for love" (II.i.). Tibullus reforms on the spot, which is underscored by the stage direction "His Courtship proves honourable on a suddain". It is, certainly, very sudden. Plays such as this demonstrate that the dichotomy of an attractive, conquering rake-hero in the early Restoration and the reformed rake of the post-Revolution era is too simplistic.

Aphra Behn's *The Rover* from the same year (1677), on the other hand, is largely a celebration of an extraordinarily dominant and ruthless rake, Willmore, although it also shows his dark side. The play is set in Naples (under Spanish rule) during Carnival and features banished cavaliers during the time of

the Interregnum, most notably Willmore, who appears to be travelling with none other than Charles II. Willmore first conquers the famous concubine Angellica, who falls in love with him and sleeps with him for free, and at the end agrees to marry Hellena, a girl intended to be a nun. While the English protagonists triumph over the pompous and strict Spanish aristocrats, they are alike in their rash and rather unpredictable behaviour. Even though the figure of Willmore is dazzling and attractive, the play remains ambiguous about his behaviour. Willmore and the other exiles need to learn to control themselves before they can be portrayed as being fit to return to England and govern.

Another popular playwright even more critical of the libertine ethos than Behn was Thomas D'Urfey (Tom Durfey). Hughes calls him "the most prolific – if not the most consistent – male writer of feminist plays" (Hughes 1996 187). D'Urfey "initially portrayed a world governed by the principles of Medley and Dorimant but has developed these principles to violent and repulsive conclusions (Hughes 1996 204). His comedy *A Fond Husband* (1677), described as a "smash hit" by Deborah Payne Fisk (Payne Fisk 2005 xxxiv), is morally more complex than the previous plays. Rashley, the male hero, has an affair with a married woman, Emilia, and his rival, Ranger, tries to convince her husband of that fact. It is obvious in the play that his moral indignation at Emilia's behaviour stems from jealousy and none of the characters in the play possesses any true virtue. Rashley, although he flaunts conventional morality, is the most sympathetic and honest of all the characters. At the end of the play Ranger resolves to avoid being involved in love intrigues but to continue "wenching" because it is the fashion (V.v.65-75). The ending is ambiguous: there is no alternative to a rake (Rashley and Ranger) and a ridiculous old citizen (Bubble); in the play there is a void in the social structure where hegemonic masculinity should be, which is only patched over with libertinism.

While the general trend was to turn away from Dorimant-like figures, some plays still celebrated them. Ravenscroft's very successful comedy *The London Cuckolds* from 1681 is one such example. "This is the only Restoration sex comedy to show no interest whatsoever in analysing or evaluating sexual conduct, simply sanctioning the romps with a token religious scepticism" (Hughes 1996 230). Cibber called it "the most rank Play that ever succeeded, was then in the highest Court-Favour" (Cibber 1966 I 267). However, for the purpose of the present analysis it is important to note that of the three Tories cuckolding the three foolish Whig aldermen, the most engaging is, in fact, a merchant rather than a gentleman, while the gentleman-rake Ramble is mostly portrayed as a bumbling fool who makes the easiest conquest of the most foolish wife. While the play thus adheres to royalist politics and uses a popular monarchist plot in which the superiority of the Tories is proven by their cuckolding of Whigs, Ravenscroft does not uphold the distinction between Tory gentlemen and Whig citizens; and while the play shows Tory sympathies, it challenges the idea of worth by birth. The positive portrayal of a citizen-rake would not catch on but is a noteworthy example of class and gender politics.

The rake is placed in an overtly political role in Crowne's satirical comedy *City Politiques*, which was written in 1682 but initially banned (presumably for political reasons) and performed first in 1683 (Combe 2001 646). The politics of the play itself are not complicated. It is set in Naples, where a Whig party led by the "Podesta" is composed of plodding, egocentric, blockheaded citizens who challenge the authority of the vice-roy and his (Tory) representatives. There are two rakes in the play who are at odds with each other: Florio and Artall. Both are to some extent reflections of the Whiggish Earl of Rochester (who had died in 1680) despite the fact that they are both Tories. Florio is "a debauch who pretends to be dying of the diseases his vices brought upon him and penitent" (*dramatis personae*). This might be a parody of Rochester's supposed penitence on his deathbed but is more likely to be a parody of the subsequent celebration of that penitence. He not only feigns his illness, he also feigns support for the Podesta's (Whig) party in order to get close to the Podesta's wife. Artall, on the other hand, is "a debauch that follows the Court" who seduces another Whig's wife, Lucinda, by copying Florio's trick. This is one of the few plays in which the consequences of a debauched life are clearly shown (though only as a trick), yet the citizens, made up of greedy lawyers, vain pompous merchants and unruly craftsmen, are portrayed as a greater threat than the sinful behaviour of gentlemen.

Nathaniel Lee's *The Princess of Cleve* from 1682 was a play that is hard to put into any genre, but was plainly a satire of court libertinism (Kaufmann 2001 1376) and Rochester, who had died two years previously. While Nathaniel Lee's play *The Princess of Cleve* is sometimes considered to be a fond remembrance of Rochester, the last two lines of the play mock his deathbed conversion: "He well repents that will not Sin, yet can,/ But Death-bed Sorrow rarely shews the Man" (V.iii.332-333). During his lifetime, Rochester would have heartily agreed with that sentiment, as shown in numerous poems about old hypocrites who rail against sins they can no longer commit. Nemours, the main character in the play, never repents and remains one of the few truly unreformed as well as unpunished rakes. Lee calls him a "bullying gallant in a wanton play" in his epilogue. The comedy was a failure (Kaufmann 2001 1376) and after 1682, when the companies merged, the sex comedy dwindled (see chapter 2) and the figure of the rake thus also became less prominent.

In contrast to Aphra Behn's most popular comedy, *The Rover* (1677), her later play *The Lucky Chance* (1686) is set in London and class conflict plays a larger role. It was modelled after the cuckolding comedies of the late 1670s but the negative reception it received points at the outmodedness of this plot (Copeland 2004 68). The play's two youthful male protagonists (as opposed to their aged rivals) are Mr. Gayman and Mr. Belmour. Belmour is not a particularly rakish character, despite his hot-headedness and his willingness to claim Letitia whether she consummated her marriage to Sir Feeble or not. Belmour poses for most of the play as Sir Feeble's nephew to gain access to Letitia as he has been convicted in England for the murder of an opponent in a duel. Mr. Gayman, on the other hand,

can be confidently labelled a rake even though he sincerely loves one woman, Julia, and seems frustrated that she has married Sir Cautious. Gayman is a fascinating and attractive figure despite the fact that he is forced to hide out in "Alsatia" (an area in Whitefriars were debtors could not be arrested) and he loves to spin intrigues. However, the only method he finds to support himself is basically to prostitute himself, first to his landlady the revolting Gammer Grime and then to his unknown benefactress (who is, in fact, Julia). His intrigues are not nearly as successful as those of Dorimant (Etherege, *The Man of Mode*, 1676) or Horner (Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, 1675) and at the end of the play Gayman is saved by the message that his uncle has died and he has inherited two thousand a year rather than by his own clever plot to rectify his finances. While the play affirms the triumph of youthful, virile aristocrats over senile, plodding (but ennobled) citizens, Gayman's financial affairs as well as Belmour's dependence on a pardon reveal the precarious foundation of this aristocratic male hegemony in the world of the Restoration.

To come to a first conclusion about the development of the rake hero in the pre-Revolution era, it is evident that the plots themselves tended to be bawdy by any standard even if bawdy elements appear to have mainly been restricted to dialogue (depending on the actors, some of the performance might have been bawdy, but the scripts rarely contained bawdy action). The portrayal of the rake is nevertheless complex and cannot be reduced to sexual exploits. The distinctions between non-libertine aristocratic men and rakes are part of a sliding scale and do not form a boundary. A play portraying men with libertine values does not necessarily advertise those values. The type of a rake who embodies something like "pure" libertine values declines significantly after the 1670s. This type may have simply reached its peak in Dorimant as Hughes supposes or it might have been influenced by the Exclusion Crisis and the near-constant subsequent political crises. However, it is also obvious that there was never a period in which the rake was universally portrayed as a hero or that this extreme form of masculine and aristocratic privilege at the expense of virtue was generally celebrated. However, libertinism was often portrayed as more positive and honourable than the bigotry and avarice of Puritan (and/or Whig) citizens. The rake was an uneasy example of hegemonic masculinity, one for which the playwrights had no alternative.

In Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* from 1688, the most positive main character Belfond Junior is perceived by some of the characters, most importantly his father, as a rake. He is described in the *dramatis personae* as having received an "all gentlemanlike education" and as being "somewhat given to women, and now and then to good fellowship, but an ingenious, well-accomplished gentleman: a man of honour, and of excellent disposition and temper". According to Hume's definition of a rake from 1977, Belfond Junior is not a rake as his behaviour is well within the custom of the time (Hume 1977 25). Nevertheless, Sir William, his father, would disagree with Hume and asks rhetorically "What, are

drinking/ and whoring no faults?" When his brother reminds him that when he was "a spark [who] would drink,/ scour and wench with the best o'th'town", he replies that "Ay, but I soon repented, married and settled" (I.i.).[10] The real problem is thus not rakish behaviour in general but that Sir William arbitrarily decided at what point in life it had to stop. Ironically, Belfond Senior, the favoured elder son who was raised in the country, is rapidly debauched in London and whores and drinks in a manner unparalleled by his younger brother. The moral target of the play is the law of primogeniture. Belfond Senior is described in the *dramatis personae* as "bred after his father's rustic, swinish manner, with great rigour and severity; upon whom his father's estate is entailed; the confidence of which makes him break out into open rebellion to his father, and become lewd, abominably vicious, stubborn, and obstinate". Belfond Senior's behaviour has nothing in common with that of a polished rake like Etherege's Dorimant or even the more ambiguous Willmore (Behn's *The Rover*, 1677). His viciousness and lewdness are the direct result of his rigorous, secluded education coupled with his privilege. The play posits a tame version of urban aristocratic masculinity against disruptive uneducated country masculinity, which might be surprising after Shadwell's frontal attack on libertinism in *The Libertine* (1675). The reasoning with which Belfond Senior is led by his companions into rioting and whoring is similar to the philosophy in *The Libertine*, but in *The Squire of Alsatia* Shadwell is one of the voices who treat libertinism as a phase in every young gentleman's life which he will grow out of to become a good man; depriving him of it will only lead to more destruction later on. Libertinism is still dangerous, as proven by the men who draw Belfond Senior in, but only if it is not curbed in time or focuses on violence.

Love's Last Shift, Cibber's first play, was first staged in January 1696 (1695, by the calendar of the time), to which Vanbrugh wrote a response in the form of *The Relapse* in November 1696. *Love's Last Shift* as well as *The Relapse* portray the tension around the crisis of aristocratic masculinity and the struggle to portray a viable alternative to libertinism. Both Cibber and Vanbrugh struggle with masculinity, unable to celebrate aristocratic libertinism but not yet able to formulate a valid alternative. Cibber skirts the issue by ending the play with the unlikely reform of Loveless, who seems to become an ideal man, while Vanbrugh ends the play with the more uneasy feeling that not only do men essentially lack positive virtues, but that there is no such thing as a natural, positive masculinity. In both plays, the young libertines emerge as the most positive masculine figures. *Love's Last Shift* used to be considered the first sentimental comedy; while that label has been contested, this play is plainly different in tone from plays of the 1670s. The rake and protagonist, Loveless, returns home after eight years on the continent and believes his wife Amanda to be dead. His old friend, Young Worthy, is well aware that Amanda is not only alive but has also inherited a fortune from her uncle. Young Worthy

[10] My edition of the play has no line numbers.

then arranges a night of passion for Loveless and Amanda, where Loveless is unaware of Amanda's identity. When he finds out she is his wife, he instantly reforms. In the meantime, Young Worthy has arranged his brother's marriage to Hillaria and his own to the heiress Narcissa. Order is restored, libertinism has been restrained.

While reformed rakes were frequent in the comedies of the period, Vanbrugh picked Cibber's play to reject that idea. The tone of John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) is similar to that of Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675), although compared to *The Libertine* it is still a happy, good-natured piece. While the first plot follows Loveless and Amanda to London, the second plot revolves around Lord Foppington and his younger brother Young Fashion, who tricks his brother out of his rich country bride, Hoyden. Young Fashion reflects both Loveless and Young Worthy in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). Young Fashion is not as dominant as Young Worthy is in *Love's Last Shift* but he is a similar character in that he is, for a lack of a better description, a decent rake and the most positive model for masculinity in the play. At the beginning of the play, Young Fashion has returned from the continent, just like Loveless, and, just like Loveless, he has mortgaged the only means of his income; while Loveless had an estate to mortgage, Young Fashion mortgages his annuity. He is in a similar position to Young Worthy as a younger brother whose lifestyle exceeds his income. In contrast to Young Worthy, however, his older brother Lord Foppington (the ennobled Sir Novelty) is anything but generous towards him. In *The Relapse* the weakness of rakes (and all other types of aristocratic men) is even bleaker than the violence in Shadwell's *The Libertine* – at least Don John was dragged to hell and thus at the end of the play punished as well as eliminated as a danger. As a good example that comedies do not necessarily have a happy ending, the play leaves the reader or spectator with the uneasy feeling that "love" is an illusion and that true happiness cannot be achieved in marriage. If we dismiss the master-servant relationship between Young Fashion and Lory in *The Relapse*, the easy-going understanding between former lovers Berinthia and Worthy is the least troubled relationship of all in the play, ultimately privileging their lifestyle over that of the others. Masculinity in the play is flawed and men unreliable; but the play does not offer an alternative to the status quo as Cibber's plays did in their promotion of domesticity.

Jeremy Colllier published his famous *A Short View on the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* in 1698, two years after *Love's Last Shift* and *The Relapse* (see chapter 2). One of his chief complaints was that the playwrights made "their *Top Characters Libertines*" (emphasis in original) (Collier 1698 2). He explicitly attacks this supposed tendency because these top characters were, in fact, gentlemen.

> A fine Gentleman is a fine Whoring, Swearing, Smutty, Atheistical Man. These Qualifications it seems compleat the *Idea* of Honour. They are the Top-Improvements of Fortune and the distinguishing Glories of Birth and Breeding! […] The Restraints of

> Conscience and the Pedantry of Virtue are unbecoming a Cavalier: Future Securities, and Reaching beyond Life, are vulgar Provisions. (Collier 1698 143-144).

Collier's idea of the ideal gentleman was thus one in which the gentleman embodied honour and piety, a view that was generally shared by members of the gentry (see chapter 2). He complained that the way gentlemen were portrayed on stage was as rakes. Collier obviously did not subscribe to the trope of the reformed rake; he considered them all unworthy of marriages, and especially marriages to heiresses. He also did not accept libertinism as a hegemonic model of masculinity. Collier was a non-juror and thus sceptical of the dominant cultural discourses. However, Collier, who had Jacobite sympathies, saw gentlemen as the natural rulers, but rejected the idea that they engaged in licentious behaviour. His idea of normative aristocratic masculinity clashed with libertinism. The spirit which fuelled this attack may be the reason for a trend, which Helga Drougge observes:

> [I]n the 1690s, a neurotic and phobic variant of the Restoration rake turns up in the comic drama: the compulsive philanderer who can only enjoy the seduction game and withdraws as soon as the fruit is ripe. Philanderers like Courtall in Southerne's *Wives' Excuse* (1692) and Vainlove in Congreve's *The Old Bachelor* (1693) do not lack masculinity. They have every kind of attribute which is in Restoration comedy associated with virility, i.e. wit, friendship with men of sense, male magnetism, forceful and competent seduction campaigns. But at a late stage in each campaign, they simply stop. (Drougge 1994 520)

The fact that these characters have all the attributes of the successful rakes of earlier comedies, but are unable to bring their campaign to successful fruition indicates that their strategies are not good enough; the way in which those aristocratic characters seek to establish their hegemony on stage is increasingly portrayed as inherently flawed and prone to failure. They might not lack masculinity, but they lack the right kind of masculinity, the one that was needed to keep England a successful patriarchal country.

However, not all rakes were suddenly failures in the comedies. Farquhar created one of the most popular rakes in his comedy *The Constant Couple; or A Trip to the Jubilee* (the play was commonly known by its second title) in 1699 and Sir Harry Wildair is not a "compulsive philanderer". The play was one of the greatest dramatic successes in the history of English drama (Rothstein 1967 19) and it remained popular for a century (Kenny 1988a 129-130). Wildair was in fact so popular that Farquhar wrote a sequel to the play two years later with the title *Sir Harry Wildair* (1701), which was a spectacular failure (Rothstein 1967 21). Sir Harry was partly popular because of the performance by Mr. Wilks, the famous actor and theatre manager; Cibber conceded that while "the *Beggars Opera* was the best-written Play, […] *Sir Harry Wildair* (as *Wilks* play'd it) was the best acted Part, that ever our English Theatre had to boast of" (Cibber 1966 171). Kenny remarks that while "Wildair obviously owed a lot to his forbears, those 'extravagant rakes' that preceded him on the Restoration stage", he was "an

original character, created from old materials but shaped by a new social and theatrical situation" (Kenny 1988a 135).

Wildair inspired a host of other male characters on stage, mostly portrayed by Wilks. Among them is Sir George Airy in Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709). Kenny argues that Wildair influenced a new type of man on stage, the "new fine gentleman", but that the "characters do not merely imitate, they evolve from Sir Harry – rakishness is increasingly diminished to talk; one gets a stronger sense of appetite than experience. The love of French fashion that borders on foppery disappears as the fashions change" (Kenny 1988 a 137). She also considers the play as one heralding the taste for devout virgins rather than chaste but witty women and the disappearance of the gay couple. She concludes that even Bevil Junior, the exemplary polite gentleman of Steele's comedy *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), was inspired by Wildair (Kenny 1988a 137). Considering the extraordinary success of the play and the number of performances Kenny lists, the claim does not appear to be far-fetched. Wildair is similar to the rake which Steele described in the *Tatler* (see above): a man whose passion led him astray but who is surely reclaimed. In Wildair, the rake and the fop are conflated. Williams, for example, considers him a fop in his analysis of the Restoration fop and calls him a "foppish-rake" (Williams 1995 178).

Originally *The Constant Couple* contained a reformation scene similar to that of Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*, when Wildair finds out that Angelica, whom he believed to be a whore, is actually a devout, chaste virgin. In that scene Wildair foreswears all vice, including alcohol ("burgundy") (Kenny 1988a 230). It is unclear when exactly the revision occurred but it was early on in the first run (Kenny 1988a 117-118). In the revised scene Wildair "looks foolish and hums a song" and remarks "Oh poor Sir Harry, what have thy angry Stars design'd?" When Lady Darling, Angelica's mother, tells him he must challenge Vizard to a duel over his deceit (he was the one who claimed Angelica was a whore) or marry Angelica, he chooses matrimony (V.i.210-245). Farquhar's later comedy, *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707), features two rakes, Aimwell and Archer, who seem to be impoverished versions of Wildair. They are extremely witty and bold, while they are also repeatedly labelled as "pretty fellows" and Archer's clothes betrays his position even while he pretends to be a servant. Their emphasis on their appearance puts them in close proximity to fops.

Congreve's play *The Way of the World* from 1700 is, on the other hand, a comedy remarkably similar in tone (and quality) to the comedies of the 1670s. Mirabell, the rake, is already reformed by the beginning of the play. He is in love with Millamant, an heiress, whose dowry is unfortunately dependent on the approval of her aunt, whom Mirabell has insulted in the past. Mirabell's capacity for intrigue is as brilliant as that of Dorimant in *The Man of Mode* but it is directed not at the obtaining of a mistress but at the securing his fiancée's dowry. The play makes it abundantly clear that Mirabell can use his wit

to seduce, however; his cast-off mistress Fainall is also featured in the play (who gives her blessing to Mirabell's marriage to Millamant). The play's moral is hard to discern in the midst of a flurry of intrigues but it gives a favourable portrayal of the rake, who is as intellectually brilliant as critics like to see him. Despite some mishaps, Mirabell remains in charge of the plot of the play and manipulates others with ease but to an end which promises stability to all.

In 1701 an anonymous play, *The Gentleman Cully*,[11] featured two exceptionally unsuccessful rakes, Faithless and Townlove. Townlove, the Cully, is cheated out of all his money by bawds and whores. More interesting, though, is his friend Faithless, who attempts to win the heiress Sophia. When Sophia finds out that he has debauched her maid she rejects him. Sophia also rejects Flash, a fop, and Ruffie, a *miles gloriosus*, and finally resolves not to marry at all. The play does not offer an alternative to the masculinities of the rake and the fop (and the *miles gloriosus*) apart from Sophia's aptly named uncle (and guardian) Censor. Maurice Shudofsky judges the play in 1940 as "a nondescript piece, interesting only in its rather unusual treatment of the hero-rake. I have yet to read a piece of this period in which the libertines receive such short shrift as do Faithless and Townlove" (Shudofsky 1940 399). The theme of the reformed rake was certainly more popular but the notion that aristocratic models of masculinity were irredeemingly flawed was not unusual.

Cibber perfected the reformed rake theme he had aimed for in *Love's Last Shift* in his second original comedy *The Careless Husband* of 1705. Sir Charles is already married to Lady Easy, his complaisant wife but cheats on her with two women, Lady Graveairs and his wife's maid Edging. The subtle and respectful way in which his wife brings about the reformation was famous (see chapter 7). *The Careless Husband* appeared in two editions in 1705 and was thereafter frequently reprinted as well as restaged. Even Alexander Pope, not one of Cibber's fans, praised it (Ashley 1989 36). Cibber's last original comedy, *The Lady's Last Stake* of 1707, features a character who is a mixture of the rake and the fop, namely Sir George Brilliant. In that sense he resembles Lord Promise in William Burnaby's *The Modish Husband* from 1702, who is discussed in chapter four. The reason Sir George Brilliant is classified as a rake in this chapter is that he reforms at the end of the play and one characteristic of the fop in general is his inability to reform. The characters of Sir George Brilliant and Lord Promise demonstrate, however, how the two quintessentially aristocratic characters of the rake and the fop became increasingly conflated. The play's failure was, in all likelihood, due to troubles between and within the theatre companies at the time rather than the play itself (Sullivan 1973 xvi).

[11] The play is most commonly attributed to Charles Johnson. The copy I used, from the Eighteenth Century Collection Online, contains a handwritten note in the place of the author reading "Charles Johnson". As the play is too insignificant for much discussion of the subject of its authorship, I label it as anonymous here.

A play in which the forceful behaviour of its male protagonist is celebrated rather than punished is Christopher Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* from 1717, a violent version of the discourse on female coyness (see Thompson's *Coyness and Crime in Restoration Comedy*, 2012). Peggy Thompson does not mention this comedy in particular but demonstrates how the assumption that "no means yes" was strong in Restoration comedy. Charles Courtwell, "a Younger Brother of a small Fortune" according to the *dramatis personae*, plans to marry Lady Outside, "a Rich Young Widow". Despite the promise of his name "court well", his final plan is to force her to marry him by arranging his friend's visit to her house in the morning with music while he enters "*as from the Bed-chamber, in a Night-Gown, Night-Cap, and Slippers*" (V.iv.).[12] When she refuses to acknowledge a marriage that never took place, he chides her and demands her obedience. It is clear that she will have to give in and marry him in secret after a number of people have not only seen him in his night-gown in her house but also heard her maid claiming that Courtwell has "wedded and bedded" her. In the last lines of the play he assures her that

> for thy engaging Charmes, I gladly
> quit the barren Pleasures of the Town,
> in the Fruition of thy
> Love, I'll fix my future Happiness:
> *On Earth we find no Joys so lasting prove,*
> *as the chaste Rapture of Connubial Love.*
> (V.iv.).

It is hard to tell whether the ending was meant to be ironic. The theme of women's coyness was pervasive. On the other hand, the last lines seem to be a parody of the power of a chaste woman to reform a rake in the vein of Cibber's comedies; Lady Outside has done nothing to reform Courtwell. And his brutish behaviour in this intrigue to force her into a marriage with him (which will mean, economically speaking, that she will lose power over the fortune she possessed previously) does not indicate that he is in any way reformed, but he is clearly in charge of all the plots of the play.

Charles Johnson's play *The Masquerade* (1719) is less violent in tone and bears similarity to Cibber's the *Lady's Last Stake*. The first rakish character we encounter is Smart, who is living with Caelia as if they were married, although she is, in fact, his mistress. While Caelia talks about him in the first scene (before he appears) as a "rake" and "evil angel" (reminiscent of Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost* of 1667 and Etherege's Dorimant in the *Man of Mode* of 1676) her maid Fidget characterises him as a mixture between a fop and a rake: "Can the creature imagine she [Caelia's cousin Sophronia] would marry a Fool/ a vain Idiot; half Coxcomb, half Rake; […] He takes an insolent Pertness for Wit, and Impudence/ for humour" (I.i.). Although he is vain, he is stupid rather than effeminate and is thus, on balance, rather a proponent of the debauched 18th-century rake than a fop. He does not reform at the end, however.

[12] I have no line numbers for this play, as it is only available to me as a facsimile of the original imprint of 1717.

In Steele's carefully constructed sentimental comedy *The Conscious Lovers* of 1722 the only rakish character is the servant Tom. At this point we have come full circle from Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, where Medley admonishes the shoemaker not to pretend to the same vices as his social betters. By 1722, Steele insinuates, the sinful manners and habits of the aristocracy have been fully adopted by the lower class of the servants, and the old servant Humphrey voices his hope that "the fashion of being lewd and/ extravagant, despising of Decency and Order, is almost at an End,/ since it arrived at person of your [Tom's] Quality." (I.i.166-168). Tom's answer is worth being quoted at length:

> […] Why now, Sir, [the old servant Humpfhrey]
> the Lacquies are the Men of Pleasure of the Age; the Top-Gamesters;
> and many a lac'd Coat about Town had their Education in our
> Party-colour'd Regiment, – We are the false Lovers; have a Taste of
> Musick, Poetry, Billet-deux, Dress, Politicks, ruin Damsels, and
> when we are weary of this lewd Town, and have a mind to take up,
> whip into our Masters Whig and Linnen, and marry Fortunes.
> […] – then again come down
> to the *Court of Requests*, and you see us all laying our broken Heads
> together for the Good of the Nation: […]
> (I.i.170-181)

The summary of his activities is an attack on aristocratic masculinity, which is painted as dominated by libertinism. This model of masculinity has become normative; even the servants imitate it. However, the play offers an alternative to the rake in the figure of the polite gentleman. Part of the humour of Steele's play is that Bevil Senior suspects that his son, Bevil Junior, is a libertine when Bevil Junior has, in fact, exemplary morals. In Tom's answer the fop and the rake are conflated, confirming the trend to regard both excesses of aristocratic masculinity as basically identical. Tom's answer also criticises the way in which low-born men could (supposedly) become members of the higher class, by aping all its sins. The complaint was nothing new on the stage; 22 years before *Conscious Lovers* was staged, Mary Pix's *The Beau Defeated; or, The Lucky Younger Brother* (1700) depicted a beau, Sir John Roverhead, who was in fact the servant of a country gentleman and very nearly managed to marry the rich city widow Mrs. Rich. While Connell states in her work on hegemonic masculinity that it was always normative, something that other men aspired to, the adaption of libertinism by the lower classes indicated a weakness in libertinism as a form of aristocratic masculinity. If their masculinity could so easily be imitated, it did not perform the basic requirement of proving a man's class and upholding class distinctions. The ruling class had to perform and demonstrate its superiority.

In general, after 1688 more reformed rakes appeared in plays and those who were not reformed were often not portrayed positively. It would imprudent to place too much value on Cibber's tongue-in-cheek epilogue to *Love's Last Shift*, where he placates the libertines in the audience by asserting that he is "lewd above four acts" (16). The fact that a reformation occurs prominently is significant as is the

fact that a rake such as Loveless in Cibber's play is not the dazzling figure that Dorimant in Etherege's play is. While a critic should not fall into the trap of placing too much emphasis on the ending, it would also be wrong to neglect the reformations, particularly in later plays. To do so would be to join moralists like Jeremy Collier and be distracted by the display of "smuttiness", "profaneness" and general "immorality" rather than seeing the underlying principles of masculine ideals which were reshaped in the process of reformation and transformed the rake's gender identity.

The shift in the portrayal of the rake on stage from the Restoration to the early 18th century was part of the challenge to those privileges and the renegotiation of social hierarchies and hegemonic masculinity. For Mackie, this makes nostalgia part of his enduring allure:

> As the bases of masculine authority shift they take with them much of the ground on which elite license staked its claim. […]. And what remains is a kind of allure both outdated in its association with the pre-1688 Stuart world and updated in its revision around privileges authorized more immediately by gender than by status. (Mackie 2009 129)

Mackie exaggerates the erosion of aristocratic privilege; while there were few distinctions in law (see chapter 2), in practice aristocratic men could still rely on their class privilege (and money) to avoid punishment (see chapter 6 on violence). However, there was a trend towards portraying the lower classes more favourably. Comedies of the early Restoration such as Howard's *The Committee* (1662), Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) and Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1685) placed men of lower origin in a category separate from the rake. Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), however, does not distinguish between Mr. Sealand, a merchant, and Belvil Senior, an aristocrat. In Steele's earlier comedy, *The Tender Husband* (1705), the country gentleman and the citizen are in the same category of ridicule without a distinction of class being made between (or indeed acknowledged) by them. Johnson's comedies as well as Cibber's also show little distinction between the classes.

Conclusion

The rake as a type is surprisingly hard to grasp; once we look beyond Etherege, Wycherley and perhaps Cibber, the boundaries between the rake and other types of men become blurry. As he is understood in this study, the rake is a male character who reflected the tensions in the shifting constructions of patriarchy and the shift to fraternal patriarchy which threatened the hegemony of the aristocracy (see chapter 2). The rake embodied the conscious exploitation of ancient privilege combined with a disregard for traditional moral values and disrespect for the older generation and a modern insistence on individuality that undercut the very foundation his privilege was based on. He resented the notion of dependence on anyone; yet on as well as off stage only a small number of rakes were in a financial position that made them truly independent; status within the aristocracy (and thus the sense of a class-

based rather than economically-based privilege) was, however, dependent on their proximity to the court, which was regarded as old-fashioned among the citizens. Aristocratic self-fashioning at court relied on a celebration of subordination to the king which was at odds with a radically individual construction of identity. The rake extended his ancient privilege to signify that he should be free from any shackles, be they the law, the king or a parent. This excess of confidence and assurance was, to some extent, celebrated on stage as a force to purge the nation of the excessive and self-righteous morality of the Puritans, providing the energy for the rebuilding of the monarchy. Laura Brown argues that Dorimant, the dazzling rake in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), expresses both Etherege's advocacy of a freedom from a morality that was identified with the middle class as well as Etherege's awareness that the subversiveness of libertines threatened the stability of society (Brown 1981 42). The rake never truly seemed to be acknowledged as an example of hegemonic masculinity even though or perhaps because the king himself was a libertine. However, libertinism was often in the position of hegemonic masculinity due to a lack of alternatives. But there was a deep uneasiness with libertinism as the normative model of masculinity.

04: The Fop as a Type

Besides the rake, the effeminate fop is perhaps the most typical aristocratic character and the most recognisable Restoration stock type. The fop was a new type on the Restoration stage and became more popular at the turn of the 18th century. J.L. Styan wrote that "the years of the Restoration scintillate with fops and beaux, coxcombs and gallants" (Styan 1986 70). Those three types are virtually identical: Fops and beaux cannot be differentiated in a meaningful way (see below) and coxcombs and gallants often overlapped with fops. And the figure of the fop was not only popular as a character on stage; he was also a popular target of the character sketches given on stage. Like the rake, the fop was the reflection of a fashion; throughout the 18th century, effeminacy was seen as an ever-growing problem and threat to the nation (Carter 2001 125-137). The threat of effeminacy he represented was a source of humour in the comedies; but that humour was always corrective, and the fop had to be taken seriously as a cautionary tale and a wake-up call to men in the capital. The comedy was only one outlet of those sentiments, but one which attracted attention. The figure of the fop was popular across a range of literary genres from the comedy to conduct literature (Carter 1997 32, see also Barker-Benfield 1992). The fop on and off stage is an emblem of the crisis of masculinity through his effeminacy expressed by an excess of politeness and refinement combined with an excess of aristocratic privilege that is devoid of meaning.

Andrew P. Williams believes the fop challenges "the validity of the social mores of Restoration society and the comedy of manners by exaggerating and making comic the codes of conduct that marked the fashionable populace" (Williams 1995 2). More specifically, the fop stood for a threat to patriarchy because his existence posed a threat to the subordination of women by men. As theorists (such as John Locke) argued for natural rights, it had to be ensured that women would still be kept away from power and patriarchy could be maintained. Londa Schiebinger argues that "natural rights could be countered only by proof of natural inequalities" (Schiebinger 1993 143). As Connell and Messerschmidt point out, the establishment of hegemonic masculinity always includes the policing and active efforts of suppression of those masculinities that threaten the patriarchy (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 844). Effeminacy became a focal point of discourses surrounding masculinity and was associated on stage with undesirable types of aristocratic men: fops. The effeminate man threatened to disrupt not only progress but also the foundation of society by undermining proper homosocial bonding and family structures, patriarchal ideals, notions of companionable marriage and the fraternal patriarchy that emerged during this period (see chapter 7).

This claim is strengthened by a closer examination of the comedy of the Restoration as well as the early 18th century, which was mainly concerned with what Leonard Braudy, for example, calls "a battle of the sexes". The figure of the fop, however, indicates that this view of the gender dynamics within these comedies is too short-sighted. At the heart of the comedies is a battle over gender(s); the comedies are as much concerned with "external" as with "internal" hegemony, to use Demetriou's terms (Demetriou 2001). The dominance exercised by men over women was as important as the hierarchy that existed between men, and that was based on their performance of gender. The fop was on the lowest rung of this hierarchy (without realising it) and he was often not even considered a man anymore (see below). The fop's failure to recognise and enact hegemonic masculinity as an aristocratic character was in some comedies not only a threat to the natural order but by extension a threat to the nation. The laughter the fop evoked thus served a higher purpose: by working to repress these effeminate tendencies within the aristocracy, playwrights aimed to stabilise society and the nation.

Humour is, of course, specific to its culture and time; the comments made about the fop in a play cannot be viewed through the lens of the 21st century but need to be situated in the rhetoric of the time. Raillery was, for example, common in prologues and epilogues. Love remarked that the prologues and epilogues of Restoration drama conventionally abused several groups of the audience and that "victims were in a position to retaliate by vocal or even physical means if they felt inclined" and that the "almost ritualized abuse of such groups as beaux [fops], whores, poets, citizens, and countrymen may paradoxically have been welcomed by the targets as a mode of acknowledgment rather than resented as an affront" (Love 1980 25). The same must be assumed for the figure of the fop as a character. Some of the ridicule heaped on him would be perceived by the intended targets in the audience as raillery rather than offence. On the other hand, the failure of the fop to realise that what he takes for raillery is meant as offence is often part of his foolishness (for example in Wycherley's comedies, but also in others, such as Etherege's *The Man of Mode).*

Bakhtin's work on the grotesque can help to position the fop in the history of laughter and ridicule, which permits an analysis of the way in which the stock type was used as a social corrective. The fop was a peculiar variant of the stage fool, that has no true predecessor. The fops were noteworthy because they were members of the aristocracy, the highest class in society. Often they were at least knights. The ridiculous had, however, classically been associated with the lower uneducated part of society. Aristotle considered the proper subject of comedy to be "an imitation of characters of a lower type" (Williams 1995 8). The fop is not a buffoon; the clown of Shakespeare's comedies has become the country gentleman in Restoration and early 18th-century comedy, also an aristocrat but one that was ridiculous for his closeness to the lower class of peasants, not his over-emphasis on refinement. Another foolish character that was remarkably (and surprisingly) similar to the clown and thus the

country gentleman was the citizen. Those character types retained, to use the Bakhtinian term, grotesque elements on the Restoration stage.

The fop, on the other hand, was hardly ever grotesque in the sense of the carnivalesque. He was not just ridiculous, he was ridiculously refined. He presents the abstract idea of effeminacy and, as Bakhtin observed, "[w]hen the grotesque is used to illustrate an abstract idea, its nature is inevitably distorted. The essence of the grotesque is precisely to present a contradictory and double-faced fullness of life […]. The abstract idea distorts this nature of the grotesque image. It transforms the center of gravity to a 'moral' meaning" (Bakhtin 1984 62). The fop as a fool thus works on a different level compared to Shakespeare's clowns and jesters, or even the country gentleman in the Restoration comedy; in this conception the fop conveys a moral meaning. While the country gentleman and the citizen had little in common with the play's protagonists, the fop was often uncomfortably close to them. That is not to say that the fop was never grotesque: especially in the plays pre-1700 there are several grotesque elements in the portrayal of the fop. Part of the carnival, or the grotesque, is the reversal of hierarchy (Bakhtin 1984 81), which happened when the fop was in charge of a scene or when the fop presumed to be superior to another man, as the fop was supposed to be at the bottom of the internal hierarchy of masculinities despite his class. It was grotesque when other male characters felt threatened by the fop. Another carnivalesque feature of the fop was his exaggeration of fashion, which visually marked him as a fool. It harked back to traditions such as the wearing of clothes inside out or trousers slipped over the head (as described by Bakhtin 1984 81). The fop's obsession with fashion was thus tied to his foolish predecessors, although the fop's fashion was also a critique of the emerging consumer society and made him a quintessentially aristocratic character; no other class of men could spend the time or money on appearance as the fop did. Of course, this did not stop men from other classes from trying, not only in comedies. In his *The Complete English Tradesman,* Defoe considers "extravagant and expensive living […] another step to a Tradesman's disaster". It is telling that he used a popular fop from the stage to illustrate his point:

> We are speaking now to a tradesman, who, 'tis supposed, must live by his business; [...] one that would be a rich tradesman, rather than a poor, fine, gay man; a grave citizen, not a peacock's feather: for he that sets up for a *Sir Fopling Flutter*, instead of a *compleat tradesman*, is not to be thought capable of relishing this discourse. (Defoe 1729 111).

Sir Fopling Flutter is the fop in Etherege's enormously popular 1676 comedy *The Man of Mode.* This character became quickly part of the popular imagination.

Williams observes that "comedy's potential as a vehicle for social instruction is contingent upon its manifestation of the ridiculous within identifiable character types who set laughable examples of behaviour that are to be avoided or censored" (Williams 1995 9). The fop increasingly served not only

as an example of behaviour to be avoided but a whole conception of masculinity to be avoided which was expressed in the effeminate behaviour of the fop. However, the censorious laughter the fop evoked could also work to call on society to "let live" as Williams claims (Williams 1995 13). In most cases, though, the ridicule worked on a darker, more serious level; it called for the exclusion of the fop to save the strength of aristocratic masculinity and to create a hegemonic, normative masculinity which was based on the strict banishment of all foppish qualities. The ridicule of the fop was a social warning. Only a few characters seriously attempt to cut a fop out of their acquaintance (Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) is one example, but Horner attempts to cut ties with all his male acquaintances). The other characters generally excuse themselves with the entertainment the fop provides with his follies. There are of course structural reasons for the fop's closeness to the other characters; for the fop to function on stage, he needs to be accepted by the other characters as part of their social circle. Moreover, through the dramatic necessity to bring the fop into proximity with the other characters of a play, the fop constitutes an excellent lens through which to study the internal hegemony of masculinities; by exhibiting undesirable behaviour, he has the potential to throw the desirable, masculine qualities of other characters into relief. However, being on friendly terms with a fop, even for the express purpose of ridiculing him, can also be an implicit criticism of another characters. The inclusion of the fop in a powerful social circle put that circle at risk.

In modern scholarship "fop" is the label of the emerging stock type of an effeminate fool. However, for the larger part of the period considered here the most frequent meaning of "fop" was fool. The general description of the fop in the *dramatis personae* was "coxcomb", (and occasionally "beau") although "coxcomb" as well as "fop" (used rarely) could describe different foolish characters (Heilman 1982 363). The first quotation in the OED for "fop" meaning "fool" dates from 1440. This meaning is now obsolete and has been replaced by "One who is foolishly attentive to and vain of his appearance, dress, or manners; a dandy, an exquisite". The first quote for fop in this meaning in the OED is from 1676. The OED quotes George Etherege's play *The Man of Mode* here as using the compound fop-call. It is doubtful that Etherege had the meaning in mind the OED ascribes to him. Throughout the play, "fop" and "foppery" are used to denote any kind of foolishness. The attribution in the OED thus seems to be too early. It seems likely, however, that it was the name of Etherege's Sir Fopling Flutter that shaped the modern, more specific meaning of "fop". A third meaning in the OED is listed as "a conceited person, a pretender to wit, wisdom, or accomplishments; a coxcomb, prig", with the first quote from 1755. That, on the other hand, might be a quotation that is too late as the word "fops" was used in several comedies for pretenders of wit.

An alternative term found especially in plays from 1690s onwards is "beau". By 1700, Randolph Trumbach claims, the beau had emerged as an intermediate type of man between the rake and the fop

(Trumbach 1990 135). Senelick cautions that "literary usage does not invariably support so sharp a discrimination" (Senelick 1990 37, footnote 5, cont. from 36). In prologues and epilogues addressing several parts of the audience, the "beaux" were a common group, often mentioned before or after whores (Love 1980 25). According to the OED, the word only retained its original French meaning of "beautiful" until the 15th century. By the 16th century, it was "used in affection, friendship, or politeness, in addressing relations, friends" (OED, meaning A2). For "a man who gives particular, or excessive, attention to dress, mien, and social etiquette; an exquisite, a fop, a dandy" (meaning B1) they cite Dryden's "Chaucer's Cock & Fox in Fables" of 1700 as the first example. However, in Cibber's comedy, *Love's Last Shift* (1696), Sir Novelty Fashion claims to have been the first person in England to have been called a "beau", which he considered praise. Since he is the quintessential fop, his boastful claim to be a beau is closely linked to his foppish attributes. In the same year, in Vanbrugh's play *The Relapse* (1696), Berinthia describes beaux as fops:

> Berinthia: []… men that may be called the beaux' antipathy [opposite], for
> they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs.
> These have brains; the beau has none.
> These are in love with their mistress; the beau with himself.
> They take care of her reputation; he's industrious to destroy it.
> They are decent; he's a fop.
> They are sound; he's rotten.
> They are men; he's an ass.
> (II.i.487-494)

It is evident that by then, "beau" was not generally used in "affection" but was used as a pejorative to denominate a man we would now call a "fop" or as a self-descriptor of this group. A term similar to beau which was frequently used was "pretty fellow".

Much of the popularity and humour of this stock type was based in the performance of the actor, of which only a few indicators remain. This general element of the analysis of drama is particularly relevant in regard to the fop. Part of an actor's performance was imperfectly captured in the play script as an attempt to capture the particularities of speech (such as "stap my vitals" by Lord Foppington) but much could not be captured. Cibber gives some hints to the way that he considered a successful fop should be played in his autobiography *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibbe*r (Cibber 1966). William Mountfort, a popular actor, noted for his beauty, occasionally played fops such as Sir Courtly Nice in Nicholas Rowe's play of the same name (1685) and his performance as a fop inspired Colley Cibber's portrayal and presumably also writing of fops. He writes that Mountfort played Sir Courtly Nice with "the insipid, soft Civility, the elegant and formal Mien, the drawling delicacy of Voice, the stately Flatness of his Address and the empty Eminence in his Attitudes", which were, according to Cibber, wholly foreign to Montfort as a man (Cibber 1966 I 129). Senelick remarks that "these traits combine

'feminine' mollitude with an aristocratic impassivity: stateliness, formality, and eminence remind the spectator that, for all his quirks, the character is a well-bred nobleman" (Senelick 1990 43). The fop was often a satire of aristocratic manners, but the fop also cautioned men of that class and those mingling with them to beware of the trap of effeminacy.

The humour was often visual. Like the medieval fools, the fop's clothes clearly marked him as a fool in their exaggeration of fashion and were his most grotesque element (see above). Most famous is perhaps Cibber's wig as Sir Novelty/Lord Fashion in no fewer than three plays (his own *Love's Last Shift*, Vanbrugh's *The Relapse*, and his own *The Careless Husband*), which was immortalised by Alexander Pope in his *Dunciad* when he enthroned Cibber as the Dunce of all Dunces in the revised version of 1743 (Dunciad, 1: 167). Margaret K. Powell and Joseph Roach quote a letter by Horace Walpole, written 1740, who uses Lord Foppington's wig to describe the hairstyle on a medieval sarcophagus (quoted by Powell/Roach 2004 80). Lord Foppington's wig had entered the popular imagination. Cibber also adapted his performance as Lord Foppington to contemporary trends in foppish male behaviour (Staves 1982 417), presumably by altering his mannerisms and possibly his voice. Cibber's ability to change his character according to the current trend indicates how much this stock type was considered to be a mirror of a contemporary trend in masculinity. It is striking how often characters in a play emphasise that the fop is an image of the time. The texts of the plays provide some hints of the mannerisms of the fop and the fact that the mannerisms of the fop continued to be adapted to the customs of the time is a strong indication that the fop was used as a comment on contemporary fashion.

While the Restoration comedy and the rake have attracted interest in scholarship since the 19th century, the fop was treated as a trivial object until the 1980s, when scholars became more interested in matters of gender. In 1982 Staves sought to establish fops and foppery as a valid topic of research in "A Few Kind Words for the Fop". She observed that not only was foppery "an historical phenomenon" rather than a purely theatrical convention, "the representation of foppery on stage during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is significantly affected by changing English attitudes towards foppery itself and also by deeper shifts in attitudes about what ideal masculine behavior should be" (Staves 1982 414). In the same year Heilman's "Some Fops and some versions of Foppery" provided a thorough overview of the use of the fop between 1660 and 1705 (the last play he considers is Cibber's *The Careless Husband* from 1705). Based on his extensive reading, Heilman compiled the most common features of the fop. Yet another article on fops was published in 1982, Richard E. Brown's "The Fops in Cibber's Comedies". In Michael Kimmel's "From Lord and Master to Cuckold and Fop" (1986) he concludes that early 18th-century representations of the fop symbolised a "crisis of masculinity" which according to him was attributed by contemporary social observers to an apparent increase in female independence. (Kimmel 1986 93-102). Susan Shapiro's "Yon Plumed Dandebrat: Male 'Effeminacy' in

English Satire and Criticism" of 1988 takes a more diachronic view of effeminacy, tracing portrayals of effeminacy from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age. Although her article contains crucial insights into the relationship between effeminacy and the excessive pursuit of woman as opposed to effeminacy and the rejection of women, it suffers from her uncritical assumption of European history as an unspecific cultural continuum.

In the wake of queer studies, the fop became an object of interest for scholars who worked on the history of homosexuality in literature. Trumbach unearthed the "sodomitical" subculture of the mollies, which contributed to changing attitudes towards effeminacy (see Trumbach 1990). Trumbach was scarcely interested in the stage, however. Williams was the first (and to my knowledge last) scholar to devote an entire monograph to the fop, *The Restoration Fop: Gender Boundaries and Comic Characterisation in Later Seventeenth-Century Drama* (1995). The last play Williams considers is Cibber's *The Lady's Last Stake* from 1707. His work is a more thorough analysis than those of Staves and Heilman and analyses the importance of the figure of the fop in the comic mode of the late 17th century. Philip Carter's article "Men about town: representations of foppery and masculinity in early eighteenth-century urban society" from 1997 is based on contemporary literature, mostly essays, to illustrate the perception of the fop. No article or study focused exclusively on the fop after this, but several critics include the fop in their analyses. Thomas King, most notably, is very interested in the fop in *The Gendering of Men, 1660-1750* (2004) with a focus on the possible queer readings of the figure.

The effeminate stock type of a fop who was particularly obsessed with appearances is not a concept developed by modern critics but was already perceived as such by contemporaries (see e.g. Brown 1700 165). Effeminacy is generally considered to be their common denominator, but there was a broad range of behaviour which could connote effeminacy and in some cases it is ambiguous whether a character can be considered effeminate in the context of the play. In addition, not all the coxcombs on stage can be neatly put into the category of the fop. Especially in the earlier comedies a wider range of stage fools (or, to use the more contemporary term, coxcombs) graced the stage but later comedies, such as *The Generous Husband* (1711) by Charles Johnson, attempted to present new types of fools too. In the prologue to this play (presumably written by the author himself), the actor says that "[o]ur Poet boldly ventures to explore,/ Two fools, who never trod the Stage before" (11-12). Johnson exaggerates. Both fools are reminiscent of older fops. His boast in the preface is an indicator that by 1711 the stock type was in danger of becoming too worn out and repetitive to capture the audience's interest.

Politeness, Refinement and Effeminacy

The first hurdle in the analysis of the fop's effeminacy is the reconstruction of the meaning of effeminacy in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Some features are virtually universal in European history, which Shapiro summarises as "weakness, softness, delicacy, enervation, cowardice, delight in luxurious food and clothing – all those qualities which oppose the essential attributes of the warrior, the most 'manly' of men" (Shapiro 1988 400). The fop served as an example of all that was wrong with aristocratic masculinity and often served as a foil to the libertine to show how dangerously close (fragile) normative masculinity was to non-masculinity. Politeness and a certain attention to one's appearance were expected of affluent and especially aristocratic men. The distinction of masculinity from feminity (or effeminacy in a man) was thus often a matter of degree rather than an absolute oppostion. The danger of slipping up and moving too far towards the feminine was tangible. The boundaries had to be strictly guarded and strengthened by heaping disgust on effeminacy. This disgust that effeminacy in men can evoke is captured by Colley Cibber in *Love's Last's Shift* when Sir Novelty Fashion's discarded mistress calls him "Thou Wretch, thou Thing, thou Animal" (IV.i.51). There was something not quite human about a person who did not fit into the gender mould that was deemed appropriate to his or her sex. In other plays, the fop is described as a toy or a plaything.

A man who was not quite a man was a thing not only to be ridiculed but also feared. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Bakhtin describes medieval laughter as a victory over fear (Bakhtin 1984 91) and claims that "it was understood that fear never lurks behind laughter […] Laughter created no dogmas and could not become authoritarian" (Bakhtin 1984 95). However, the laughter the fop evoked was the opposite; the ridiculousness of the fop evoked fear that was concealed by laughter. It is striking how often fops are insulted by other characters as being a "nothing". They are neither men nor women, and they are insignificant as rivals in love (apart from providing ridicule). The sexual connotation that they possess "no thing" (no penis) is also evident, especially in earlier comedies. It also means that there is nothing to them. The fop is essentially an empty character who makes up his lack of inner purpose or meaning by emphasising and overstating his surface. The fop lays bare the weaknesses in the superficial trappings of privilege and their failure to uphold the patriarchal system, which should be their social role and which was why aristocratic masculinity was intended to be hegemonic. Through his emptiness combined with his lack of masculinity, he emphasises the necessity of an inner, natural masculinity at the core of a truly masculine character:

> Foppery named the subject's refusal to locate the gaze beyond his own particular embodiment, whether externally, in the social code of politeness, or inwardly, as consciousness. Whereas the polite gentlemen recognized and granted each other legitimacy, consolidating connections among

> classed bodies through mutual regard, fops could get by with a mirror (King 2004 228).

The emptiness of the fops can be described by a set of traits which they pretend to have but do not possess.

The comedies were not harsher than other texts in their equation of effeminacy with a threat to the stability of the nation. In one anonymous pamphlet with the imposing title *The Levellers: A Dialogue between two young Ladies, concerning Matrimony, proposing the Act for enforcing Marriage, for the Equality of Matches, and Taxing Single Persons. With the danger of Celibacy to a Nation* (originally 1703, reprinted 1745), the author attacks effeminate "beaux" as part of the danger to marriage. Sophia, one of the two ladies, is quoted as saying that

> The Men are grown full as effeminate as the Women; we are rivalled by them even in the Fooleries peculiar to our Sex: they dress like Anticks and Stage-Players, and are as ridiculous as Monkies; they sit in monstrous long Perukes, like so many Owls in Ivy-Bushes; and esteem themselves upon the Reputation of being a Beau, than on the substantial Qualifications of Honour, Courage, Learning and Judgement. (Anonymous 1745 419)

Sophia thus defines what effeminacy meant to the anonymous pamphleteer: they paid excessive care to their appearance and neglected honour, courage, learning and judgement, which are thus denoted as masculine virtues (part of normative, hegemonic masculinity). The danger in this was the threat to matrimony – the author already proposes in the title that celibacy poses a serious danger to a nation. Effeminate men who rival women in their "fooleries" are not suitable husbands and, as we can see in Sophia's list of desirable qualities, not suitable for any office as they lack all the qualifications. The danger they pose to marriage is also a danger they pose to the nation.

Bryson and Shapiro demonstrate that the motif of the effeminate courtier goes back to at least the 12th century (Shapiro 1988 400-12, Bryson 1998 125). Effeminacy was a rising concern in the Renaissance with the emergence of the courtier, and the contrast between the effeminate courtier and a more robust sort of man had already been present on the Renaissance stage. In his work on the history of masculinity and war Braudy uses a quote from Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part I* (217-218). A "popinjay" lord had demanded the prisoners of the seasoned warrior Harry Hotspur (Harry Percy), which he refuses:

> ... he made me mad
> To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
> And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
> Of guns and drums and wounds - God save the mark! -
> And telling me that the sovereignest thing on earth
> Was parmacity [sperm whale ointment] for an inward bruise,
> And that it was a great pity, so it was,
> This villainous saltpetre should be digged

> Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
> Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed
> So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,
> He would himself have been a soldier.
> (I.iii.52-63)

The comic effect of opposing a hardy warrior or a *miles gloriosus* with a fop remained popular, being used, for example, in Baker's play *Tunbridge Walks* (1703) and Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1706). Although this popinjay lord predates the restoration fops by at least 70 years (Henry IV is considered to have been written no later than 1597, the earliest effeminate fops of the Restoration emerged in the 1670s), most of his features are strongly reminiscent of the Restoration fop. He obviously took care of his armour, which shone briskly, and he smelled sweet. Caring about one's visual and olfactory impact was an important feature of the fop. Sir Courtly Nice, the eponymous protagonist in Crowne's 1685 comedy, avoided men due to their offending smell. In the 16th and 17th centuries smelling sweet involved considerable expenditure on perfumes and was thus only available to rich men. Effeminacy in courtiers was thus nothing new and had been mocked before. Refinement in culture had also begun in the Renaissance (euphuism, the ornate prose style, is one example here) and even those in the 18th century who deplored the overly refined fop would not have appreciated medieval manners and customs. Effeminacy had not, however, previously been perceived as a problem that threatened the stability of the entire nation. It could only become one when the aristocracy, of which most effeminate fops were part, regained political power outside court positions, while in a parallel development the middle class emerged as an economic power and its increasing participation in the public and literary sphere shaped those spaces.

Braudy observes that Shakespeare confronts "the begrimed soldier with the perfumed courtier as two extremes of mutually uncomprehending masculinity" (Braudy 2005 218). Farquhar may have had this scene in mind when the foppish Captain Brazen in his *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) hesitates to duel with Worthy because Worthy has brought pistols for the purpose, while Brazen is accustomed to duelling with swords (V.iv.). This might be a suggestion that he is more at home with amours than on the fields of battle, as a soldier at the time would be familiar with firearms. Swords also have a phallic connection (see chapter 5) emphasizing Brazen's interest in women rather than battle. It could also hint at old-fashioned habits. Brazen also lacks courage. First of all, the pistols give him an excuse to avoid the duel all together while pretending to take the moral high ground. Also, presumably, Brazen is well versed in sword fighting and able to defend himself against attacks. In a duel with pistols it is impossible to defend oneself, or in Brazen's words: "dam't there's no parrying these Bullets" (V.iv.12). He soon gives in, however, and takes a pistol. Brazen then stalls the proceedings by asking where Worthy's cloak is, as "I always fight upon a Cloak, 'tis our way abroad" (V.vi.24). By referencing to "our

way abroad" he implicates that he, an officer in the English army, is not quite English. This duel is stopped before it can start by another character. Brazen stops his other duel on stage, with Captain Plume, by suddenly claiming he is satisfied. That escape is not readily available if pistols are used. The opposition between Captain Plume and Brazen must have had a similar effect on stage as that of Shakespeare's scene.

The link between effeminacy and politics had become stronger in the reign of James I (Senelick 1990 40) and courts after the Restoration continued to be charged with effeminacy. Heilman argues that Charles II's court was directly responsible for the emergence of the fashion-conscious fop:

> Euphuists, pedants, précieux, various "humors," pretentious worldlings of earlier vintage were forerunners if not actual contributors to the idea of the Restoration fop. But it took Charles II's court, with its reactions against the Commonwealth, its secular sense of the elect and the non-elect and the too-elect, and its awareness of French style that could be both compelling and overbearing and hence conducive to both xenophilia and xenophobia, to create, within the immense realm of fopdom, the new foppery of hyperbolic stylishness (Heilman 1982 365-6)

Heilman exaggerates somewhat. The xenophobia in regard to the fop was new, but the hyperbolic stylishness was not. The problem with the exaggerated style was rather that during Charles II's time it began to be perceived as outdated outside the court. Charles II's court undoubtedly shaped pre-Revolution drama but the court was only one of various contributing factors. It is noteworthy that all of the famous commentators on politeness (Steele, Addison, John Locke and the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury) were Whigs, which explains part of the attacks on politeness. In Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683), which is explicitly anti-Whig, Craffy, a young Whig, is a foppish poet, pretending to refinement while the rakes have rougher manners and are Tories.

Independence was the ideal that men strove for in the 18th century and fops were increasingly seen as lacking in this respect (Kimmel 1986 93-102). At the same time, women increasingly made their voices heard by taking up the pen and publishing their work (Aphra Behn, Mary Astell, Manly Delarivier, Susannah Centlivre and other women actively published their political opinions and engaged in pamphlet wars with men). With women encroaching on traditionally male spheres, men who encroached on female territory were seen as especially devious and a potential threat that could turn the traditional hierarchy upside down (similar discussions can be observed in the 20th and 21st century, see Messner 2004 and Connell/Messerschmidt 2005). Such a horror vision of the future is painted in Edward Ward's observation of scenes in the park which he recorded in *The London Spy* from 1706:

> I could by no means reconcile myself to the sheepish *Humility* of their Cringing *Worshippers*, who were guilty of so much idolatry to the *Fair Sex*, that I thought the Laws of the *Creation* were greatly transgressed […] For the Men look'd so *Effeminate* […]. It seemed to me as if the World was turn'd Top-side-turvy; for the Ladies look'd like undaunted Heroes, fit for

> *Government* or *Battle*, and the Gentlemen like a parcel of Fawning,
> Flattering *Fops* (Ward, 1706, ii.179-80)

Ward considered the position of men above women as a law of creation, the transgression of which was clearly not only distasteful but threatening. Ward's equation of "heroes" with "fit for Government or Battle" is particularly noteworthy. It infers that men who govern should be "undaunting" heroes, but fops are not and let women take over. Of course, in 1706, a woman governed England, Queen Anne, whose husband, Prince George, was content with his role as prince consort and let her govern alone. Although Somerset claims that "the fact that Prince George was widely regarded as a nonentity helped reconcile people to his anomalous status" (Somerset 2012 182), Ward's words may also be a stab against the current political situation.

It was widely speculated in books, journals and pamphlets what the root cause for effeminacy was. Some saw it as a product of studious research and practice, as suggested by the assessment that the arch-rake Dorimant and Young Bellair make of Sir Fopling in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), while others assumed an organic cause, as in the English sex manual, *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1684). There was little open speculation about the root cause of effeminacy in comedies. It was, however, often implied that it stemmed from the customs of the age. According to most commentators, effeminacy was not inborn but rather a deplorable condition that contemporary customs encouraged in weak men. George Cheney, a doctor, considered effeminacy to be the symptom of a nation degenerated by luxury. In 1733, he wrote in *English Malady*: "When Mankind was simple, plain, honest, and frugal; there were few or no Diseases" (quoted by Barker-Benfield 1992 12). Cheney also extended his vision to the decline of the Greeks and Romans – his concern, according to Barker-Benfield, was the degradation of men (Barker-Benfield 1992 12). This was common during the 18th century (Carter 2001 129). Edward Gibbon, for example, echoed Cheney's sentiments in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1789). Such concerns were already formulated in pamphlets and the comedy during the late 17th and early 18th century. Luxury and effeminacy were closely linked in such works, and were claimed to be caused by the rise of readily available consumer goods. Luxury and effeminacy threatened the nation, was the conclusion. "Books, periodical essays, magazine articles, songs, and verse were devoted to charting the loss of traditional male virtues such as moderation, sense, public duty, integrity and independence for which, in this unashamedly nostalgic literature, British manhood had once been famed and feared" (Carter 2001 129). The rising popularity from the 1690s to the 1720s of the effeminate fop on stage, who stood for everything that opposed these values, reflects contemporary anxiety about effeminacy, which is also reflected in other contemporary genres, for example in Steele's and Addison's periodicals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Addison and Steele described the fop repeatedly in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*; on 9 June 1709, for example, *The Tatler*

ordered the servants of White's Chocolate House and St. James's Coffeehouse to bar effeminate males from entering (Steele 1987 200). Brian Cowan suggests that Addison and Steele were so strict with the pretty gentlemen in the coffeehouse because everyone, including the eminent reformers of manners themselves, were prone to the vice of foppery (Cowan 2001 142).

Contemporaries habitually blamed refinement and effeminacy on consumerism. More and more women became consumers of fashion rather than producers, and there was an increase in the number of milliners to serve them, most of them men. Both Maiden in Baker's *Tunbridge Walks* (1703) and Sir Amorous Vainwit in Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1717) were merchants connected to selling "fripperies" before they inherited money and became fops, although most fops on stage were men born into aristocracy. Senelick claims that "there is an implicit belief that anyone so intimately connected with women's fripperies will catch the contagion of womanish, so man-milliner becomes a standard euphemism for the effeminate sodomite" (Senelick 1990 46). The fop missed that social cue. As England became a consumer society, which defined consumers mainly as women (Barker-Benfield 1992 xxvi), the delight in luxurious food and clothing became even more effeminate. Carter also states that the trend towards more sober fashion had already started in the early 18th century and would culminate in the 19th century (Carter 2001 58).

Many treatises on politeness also emphasised that modest dress was part of civility and warned explicitly against superfluous and extravagant fashions (Peltonen 2003 162-165). In an early example in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), Dorilant teases the fop Sparkish, who pretends to have ditched an earl to be in the company of Harcourt, Dorilant and Horner: "Why, I thought thou hadst loved a man with a/ title better than a suit with a French trimming to't" (I.i.). Sparkish does not reply to that taunt, perhaps because he believed it to be harmless raillery, a pretence to tease him for something that actually distinguished him as a gentleman who understood gentlemanly priorities. In II.i he tells Alithea that he cannot stay with her in the lodge and has to go down to the pit, because "if I sate in the box, I/ should be thought no judge but of trimmings" (II.i.335-337). While he knows that to be thought a judge of clothing is inferior to being considered a wit, he also admits that he is thought a judge of clothing. Sir Novelty in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) boasts "I had all the eminent Taylors about Town at my Levee" (II.i.88). Those tailors allegedly petitioned for the permission to copy a coat he designed himself. Sir Novelty is certainly not ironic in his use of the epithet "eminent", by which he elevates the profession. A short while earlier, Narcissa alleges that "I'll warrant there's not a Milliner in Town/ but has got an Estate by you", which he readily admits (II.i.46-47). Sir Novelty is like the newly emerged female consumer of fashion. His power lies in the world of luxury and fashion. In Vanbrugh's response *The Relapse* (1696) the audience sees Lord Foppington's private levee in I.iii.

A related common cliché is the fop's love of mirrors (or "glasses").[13] In Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) Sir Fopling asks Dorimant why he does not have a mirror ("glass") in his room for a "room is the dullest thing without one". Bellair, the young idealist of the play, answers: "Here is company to entertain you". Sir Fopling explains that a mirror might entertain a man when he is alone (IV.ii.88-91). Medley's reply is the most telling: "I find, Sir Fopling, in your solitude you remember/ the saying of the wise man, and study yourself" (IV.ii.95-96). To the fop, the mirror shows all that he is; the style of his clothes and his studied gestures reveal him as a man of mode and a man of the world. The fop's association with the mirror emphasises his role as a mirror to society, to reflect to the audience what was wrong with contemporary aristocratic masculinity.

Sir Novelty takes the centre stage in the first scene of the second act in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). He is visiting Narcissa and her cousin Hillaria (courted by Younger Worthy and Elder Worthy respectively) in their home. Narcissa is officially intended by her father for Elder Worthy. Sir Novelty is thus teases Narcissa with Elder Worthy while he fishes for compliments. The points upon which he compares himself (favourably) with Elder Worthy are his appearance and his fashion sense. In both of which, Narcissa assures him, he outdoes Elder Worthy, whom she calls "an unpolisht animal" (II.i.20). Later, when Young Worthy appears, he asks Narcissa about the identity of this young man, to which she replies "Mr. Worthy's Brother, Sir, a Gentleman of no mean Parts, I/ can assure you", to which he replies "I don't doubt it, Madam: He has a very good Periwig." (II.i.161-165). Sir Novelty judges both brothers entirely on their surface appearance. He fails to see Elder Worthy's sobriety and his generosity towards his younger brother as well as Young Worthy's wit. In Sir Novelty's world a man's worth is determined by his outer appearance and the way people talk about him.

This refinement of appearance originated in France. The influence of French customs on the culture of the court (and aristocracy in general) was considerable. Both libertinism (as portrayed on stage in the form of the rake) and effeminacy (portrayed by the fop) were "blamed" on the French. While French was in fact the lingua franca at many courts in Europe and French influence and French refinement may have seemed natural to the King and his courtiers, the general population was hostile towards its absolutist, Catholic neighbour. The king's excessive sex life (see chapter 5) was only part of what gave the appearance that Charles II's actions were detrimental to the nation's interest. The second issue his subjects had was his close connection to France. This was in some way connected to his love life, as Louis XIV supplied Charles with French mistresses. "About 1674-75 the radical Whig poet John Ayloffe bemoaned, 'A colony of French possess the court' and Charles's 'fair soul, transform'd by that French dame [the Duchess of Portsmouth],/ Had lost all sense of honor, justice, fame.'[14] One abusive poem

[13] Glass mirrors were a new invention – they were produced in France from 1665 onwards.
[14] John Ayloffe was executed in 1685 for his alleged role in the Rye House Plot to assassinate Charles II.

from the Exclusion Crisis […] added, 'This French Hagg's Pockey Bum' had become 'so powerfull …. of late' that 'It rules both Church and State'" (Harris 2007 49). Again, the king's masculinity and power are undermined by a cunning woman, above all a French woman who was even more threatening than an English mistress.

While the fops come from English families, the fop is often suspected to be not quite English in his behaviour and thus to somehow betray his country by his manners. The term "beau" for fop (see above) indicates that the misbehaviour of the fop, like that of the rake, was associated with French culture. The association of France with effeminacy was firmly established before the Restoration. John Donne, for example, wrote in his love elegy "To his mistress on going abroad":

> Richly clothed apes are call'd apes, and as soon
> Eclipsed as bright, we call the moon the moon.
> Men of France, changeable chameleons,
> Spitals of diseases, shops of fashions,
> Love's fuellers, and the rightest company
> Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
> Will quickly know thee, and no less, alas!
> (31-37)

The "Men of France" in Donne's elegy are "changeable chameleons" like both the rake and the fop, "spitals of diseases", presumably venereal diseases, which libertines suffered from, "shops of fashions" like the fops and "love's fuellers" like the libertine and, to some extent, the fop. Donne also highlights the intrinsic quality of this particular character type for the stage: these supposed real-life equivalents were dishonest and constantly conscious of their own performance.

In Wycherley's *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1672) the Hispanophile James Formal ("Don Diego") is juxtaposed with his foppish nephew Mr. Parris (or Monsieur de Paris). Both were citizens in disguise, merely pretending to be foreign gentlemen. Wycherley thus implies that aping foreign fashion and the disdain for English customs is not only connected to the aristocracy, but a more common vice. It also had a xenophobic elements, ridiculing the masculinity of foreign aristocrats. A fool similar to Don Diego and Monsieur de Paris was De Boastado in Ravencroft's *The Careless Lovers* (1673), a fop who combined their love of Spanish as well as French customs. The aping of Spanish customs seems to have gone out of fashion after those early years and the trend to ridicule foreign customs narrowed down to the ridiculing of aping French customs. While characters such as James Formal do not fit into the fop stock type and are not effeminate (albeit weak) characters, Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) contributed to the link between effeminacy and francophilia on stage. Sir Fopling in *The Man of Mode* shows a strong attachment to French culture, something he assumes he shares with Dorimant, the rake. As soon as he meets Dorimant, he compliments him on his French air.

> Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance
> who retain so much of Paris as thou dost: the very air thou hadst
> when the marquise mistook thee I' th' Tuileries and cried, 'Hey,
> Chevalier', and then begged thy pardon. (III.ii.140-143)

This statement brings Sir Fopling and Dorimant close together again. Dorimant's airs and behaviour are also not connoted as English, but as French.[15]

Dorimant succeeds better at adopting manners and fashions than Sir Fopling. Deborah Payne Fisk notes that she did not amend "Hey" in line 142 to "Hé" as it is likely that this blunder is deliberate on Etherege's part. Sir Fopling strives to emulate French culture, but it is implied that it is rather unlikely that he would be mistaken for a chevalier. In *The Man of Mode* (1676), a Tory play by a playwright who was close to the court, France and French manners are not demonised and the fop is merely ridiculous because he overdoes his adaption of French manners. However, in many other plays such as Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), the fop was not markedly Francophile. Sir Novelty only has one scene where he displays his French knowledge. In the first scene of Act II he and Narcissa ridicule Elder Worthy. Narcissa is the first to use "valet de chambre" and "beau monde", after which he replies to a comment by Hillaria with "Then your Ladyship really thinks they are – Bien/ Entendue!" to which Hillaria replies "A Merveil Monsieur!" (II.i.83-85). This short display is nothing less than could be expected from members of the educated class but it also insinuates that fashion is intrinsically linked with France. Sir Novelty is, apart from that, an almost patriotic fop; he never openly disdains English customs and his French appears to be superficial at best.

The English were right to suspect that civility and politeness were not native english customs. Civility was developed in Italy and most treatises in the Elizabethan periods were translations from the Italian or based on Italian sources. During the Restoration most treatises were translations from French; the term "politeness", for example, which gained popularity at the end of the 17th century was imported from France (Peltonen 2003 146-48). Not surprisingly, this made some commentators uneasy. When fops displayed a marked Francophilia, they revealed the superiority of English masculinity. Their excessive zest for refinement and their emphasis on taste is in some plays symbolic of the failure of refinement and politeness to improve morals (contrary to Locke's and later Shaftesbury's contention, see below). Refinement is almost inevitably linked to France in comedies which feature fops, although refinement as such is not always connoted as objectionable and irreconcilable with masculinity. In those cases it is the fop's excess that is the issue. Richard Steele, the Whig reformer of manners, not only locates the origin of effeminate foppery in France and Italy, he also attributes the corruption of

[15] For example, I.i.64-65, where the Orange Woman is disgusted by Dorimant's and Medley's French-style kissing when they greet another.

ladies' taste in men to those countries. In *The Tender Husband* (1705) Clerimont Senior complains that he took his wife to France and Italy "where she learn'd/ to lose her Money Gracefully, to admire every Vanity in our Sex,/ and contemn every Virtue in her own, which […]/ are the ordinary Improvements of a Travail'd Lady" (I.i.17-22).[16] In short, what she learned in France was refinement and the admiration of fops. Refinement itself was desired by some and reviled by others. On the other hand, a lack of refinement was as ridiculous as its excess. The figure of the country gentleman, for example, was ridiculous because he completely lacked refinement. Especially the later fops, in contrast, took refinement too far. The ideal was thus to be found somewhere in the middle. In the writings of the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, [17] one of the most important commentators on manners, politeness and refinement were closely connected. Broadly speaking, he posited that education and refinement would produce virtue and polite manners. Traditionally, courts and courtiers had long been the locus of refinement (the history of refinement and court was first described by Norbert Elias (2006)). Shaftesbury (and others) widened the circle of those who could aspire to refinement and thus become part in the polite society. Shaftesbury's writings, which were designed to promote "moral sense" and refinement, were collected and printed as *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times* in 1711. As Lawrence E. Klein notes in his introduction to the 1999 Cambridge edition of this work, Shaftesbury was concerned with the betterment of society by creating a moral, political and aesthetic education (or *paideia*) as well as personal improvement (Klein 1999 ix).

As discussed above, while the fop owed some of his traits to the history of medieval fools, he was also a very modern character who embodied the threat to masculinity and the patriarchy by the trends of refinement and politeness. In the conception of Locke, Shaftesbury and Steele (among others), politeness was designed to establish the superiority of educated, polite and refined gentlemen and to justify their claim to power, positing politeness and refinements as hallmarks of hegemonic masculinity. The fop was a figure that was employed as a warning against excesses of refinement and demonstrated the difficulty of the concept of politeness. However, it can be difficult to ascertain how this was accomplished and to read the fops mannerisms correctly. Anna Bryson reminds us that the past is like a foreign country and to understand it, we need to understand the rules of everyday social encounters and exchanges and "crack the society's code of manners" (Bryson 1998 1). Manners were important in early modern England – Bryson writes about the late 16th and early 17th century but "manners maketh man" (Bryson 1998 5) was very much a concern after the Restoration. After 1660, the discussion about manners – civility or politeness – occupied a large part of cultural discourse. While there was relatively

[16] In some ways Steele's accusations are reminiscent of Rochester's poem "Signor Dildo".
[17] Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury. He was named after his grandfather, the 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, who was one of the founders of the Whig party and a proponent of the Exclusion Bill.

little disagreement in the earlier periods about the proper definition of civility, "it became a highly contested notion" after the Restoration (Peltonen 2003 147). The effeminacy of the fop expressed uneasiness with competing codes of manners, the courtesy of the courtiers that was adapted by other parts of the elite too, and the notion of politeness, which was newly emerging. The terms "politeness" and "polite society" are crucial in the scholarship concerned with the 18th century, but it is not easy to come to a definition (Carter 2001 16, Langford 2002 311). Paul Langford notes: "Politeness is a keyword for historians of Eighteenth-Century Britain. It implied a distinguishing vision for wider social concerns and less constricted cultural tastes than what was attributed to earlier ages" (Langford 2002 311). Based on contemporary texts, Carter comes to the following definition of polite society: "Polite society can be said to consist broadly […] of those who sought a reputation for refinement, whether this reputation be politeness or sensibility, sociability or snobbishness […]. [P]articipation in this polite society could […] be understood both as a statement of national progress and as a symbol of competition facilitating personal advancement" (Carter 2001 19). While politeness and courtesy are virtually synonymous in the 21st century, 18th-century commentators made a distinction between courtesy (understood as courtliness) and politeness. Bryson traced the development from courtesy to civility (which was replaced by politeness) over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century as a gradual process. In essence, she claims that it was a transformation from traditional styles of lordship and service, located in the noble household, to new forms of mannered self-representation required in a less familiar civil society. The presentation of personality by enacting a social code of elegant and civilised conduct was designed to influence those with power in the competitive court environment (Bryson 1998 126).

In the 18th century, moralists and philosophers concerned with politeness saw court manners as "affected gratitude" and "impeccable but inscrutable" and courtiers as "prone to excessively mannered conduct" (Carter 2001 57). In France, politeness was a function of the aristocratic revolt against the "social stranglehold of the French court," and this was reflected in England, especially in the 18th century, when the courts of Queen Anne and the Hanoverians lost their power "to inflict social oblivion on the nobility" (Langford 2002 313). However, Langford also points out that it was not only a revolt against the court but also against all of the great aristocratic families "who mimicked the monarchy with their own lesser but elaborate hierarchies" (Langford 2002 313). The difficulty was that there were little differences in the manners expected of a man in practical terms (Carter 2001 60, Peltonen 2003 147) and the distinction that was made in theory had little relevance in daily interactions. The country gentleman and the citizen showed no manners at all. The fop (and the rake) would be rather inclined to follow the example of the court, but their manners were similar to that of polite gentlemen, though portrayed as more affected and artificial.

Writers such as Steele, Addison and Swift identified both the rake and the fop as examples of court manners (Carter 2001 59), and many comedies reflected this attitude. Notions of politeness which were spread by writers such as the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, Steele and Addison "proposed forms of gentlemanly conduct that fully discounted and discredited the idea of duplicitous behaviour" (Carter 2001 57). Langford distinguishes between these forms, by proposing a "Spectator mode" of politeness (spearheaded by Addison and Steele), which placed emphasis on a "natural" code of behaviour, and a "Shaftesbury mode" (spearheaded, obviously by Shaftesbury), which placed emphasis on virtue and taste (Langford 2002 312). Carter's study charts the relevance of polite society for men from 1660 to 1800. In a study of the rake and the fop and their place in contested hierarchies of masculinity and the discourses around hegemonic or normative masculinity, the topic can only be touched upon. The following section will be restricted to a discussion of the ways in which the fop embodied courtliness and refinement and why it was perceived as a threat to masculinity and, as a consequence, to national stability.

In comedies, most fops were still bound in formal courtesy, much like the old debauches and country gentlemen; the attribute "formal" is often used as their descriptor and always meant pejoratively. Social faults committed by formal fools were ridiculous, but ceremony and formality could also be perceived as dangerous. Formality and ceremony were connected to deviousness: it was possible "to disguise personal self-interest behind a veneer of seemingly refined and sincere sociability" (Carter 2001 126). Carter places that observation in his section on "Effeminacy, Foppery and the Boundaries of Polite Society", and although he does not state it explicitely, this sentence could serve as a description of the majority of fops in comedies. Their ridiculous manners could barely hide their destructive self-interest. Their behaviour was affected and finical; they aped the manners of a gentleman but lacked the inward qualities which moral writers recommended. Locke placed emphasis on "inward Civility" and inner refinement (Locke 1989). As mentioned above, Locke, Steele, and Addison as well as Shaftesbury remained vague as to how politeness should be enacted, beyond claiming that it must be "easy" and unaffected. In practical terms, as discussed above, there was little difference between older modes of civility and the politeness promoted by Steele, Addison, Shaftesbury and others. This made the fop both a threat to true politeness for those who promoted it and an exemplum of the inadequacy of the conception of politeness for those who considered politeness and refinement un-English and unnecessary.

The word "refinement" gained its modern meaning at the beginning of the 18th century, which emphasises how important the notion was at the time. The most common meaning, and the one still retained today, is of course "fineness of feeling, taste, or thought; cultured elegance in behaviour or manner; sophisticated and superior good taste" (OED meaning 3B, first quoted 1704). Related to this

is "[t]he action or practice of refining in thought, reasoning, or discourse; subtle, or oversubtle, reasoning or analysis. Now rare" (4B, first found 1712). As the term "refinement" itself hardly comes up in comedies, the finer distinctions are not of relevance here, but it is noteworthy that all these meanings were established during the time analysed here, which indicates that this was a new phenomenon. A related term, especially in connection with fops, is "nice". The entry for "nice" in the OED is long. Meaning 1B, the oldest in the OED, is "foolish". The last quotes for this usage are from the mid-17th century. There were most likely still lingering connotations of nice as "silly" in the early Restoration (the last quote in the OED in meaning 1B is from 1657) as well as "encouraging wantonness" (last quote 1665). It could also mean as early as 1395 "of dress: extravagant, showy ostentatious" (meaning 2C), "elegant" (mentioned from 1400, meaning 2D) or "fastidious" (3B). "Nice" was used as "refined, cultured, associated with polite society" as early as 1588. The OED quotes Lord Foppington in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* for this use ("The Lards I commonly eat with, are people of a nice Conversation"). Meaning 4A is perhaps related to this: "in early use: faint-hearted, timorous, cowardly, unmanly. Later also: effeminate". The last example in the OED is from Baker's 1703 comedy *Tunbridge-Walks* in the description of the fop Maiden: "Maiden, a Nice-Fellow, that values himself upon all Effeminacies". Interestingly, the fop commonly uses "nice" as a positive word (e.g. Sir Novelty in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) asks Hillaria and Narcissa for their "Judgements in a particular nice Fancy", which he intended to wear at court). It was the figure of the polite gentleman that defined socially acceptable taste, while the fop allowed his delight in good taste to degenerate into perverse and selfish pleasures. John C. Beynon points out in his dissertation on "Men of Mode" that Shaftesbury "variously described these profligates as 'princely,' 'courtly,' 'foppish,' 'effeminate,' or even 'monstrous,' but in each case, the pleasure-driven individual was depicted as Epicurean knave driven to satisfy private ambitions at the expense of pursuing the common good" (Beynon 2001 24). Politeness and refinement as understood by Shaftesbury contradicted the courtesy and courtliness of the selfish fop; politeness was a hallmark of hegemonic masculinity, validating the cultural and political hegemony of the ruling class who distinguished themselves from the men of the lower classes by their refinement. The fop's pretence to refinement threatened this new conception of hegemonic masculinity.

Politeness as Locke, Steele, Addison, and Swift defined it was closely bound to education. Fops pretend to learning which they do not possess and which has nothing to do with refinement. Sir Amourous Vainwit, the fop in Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1717), the son of a well-to-do merchant who has been to university, exclaims when he realises that he greeted an acquaintance, Colonel Manly, while ignoring Manly's friend Courtwell (the brother of an heiress):

> Now may Convulsions seize and excruciate my Optick Nerves if I saw him before – O Stupidity unparallel'd, incongruous to all Sense and Breeding; 'sdeath, I have inadvertedly and

> precipitately illaqueated my self in an irrecoverable Confusion - I am totally debilitated of all Power of Elocution, utterly incapable to excogitate an Apology of Efficacy, to abrogate his Censure of my Rusticity. (I.i.)

All the while, he still, of course, does not give Manly the chance to introduce Courtwell and Sir Amorous to each other. Sir Amorous is well aware that the reaction towards the discovery of his own social faux-pas should have rendered him speechless in shame and confusion. As he is incapable of feeling abashed or contrite, he is unable to actually perform the feeling and only pays lip service to it while he uses the opportunity to try to impress Courtwell with his learned vocabulary. The fop is easily able to believe in his superiority and his success because he only understands surfaces. He sees the rituals of friendship without perceiving the deeper bonds between friends. He sees the witty style of his peers and imitates it without understanding the intellectual thought processes behind it. Dale Underwood remarks of Sir Fopling that he is "incapable of either 'heroic' appetite or love. Yet his lack of both keeps him from playing the fool in other ways […]. Since he is incapable of 'passion,' he is also incapable of 'the fall'." (Underwood 1957 84-85)

The history of the fop on stage

Just like the rake, the figure of the fop evolved in the period between the early Restoration and the mid-18th century, reflecting the concerns and the taste of the time. In order to trace the history of the effeminate fop, the following chronological overview will take a broader view of foppery and include fops that only show one aspect of the later foppish repertoire. As already indicated, the fop enjoyed growing popularity as the period progressed. The development of the fop as a stage character emphasises the growing discomfort with effeminacy. Williams claims that the fop became a more positive figure towards the early 18th century (Williams 1995 125 ff.), but on what grounds is unclear. The fop became a more popular figure, but the development of the fop turned him into an increasingly negative, even threatening figure. The inclusion of the fop within the aristocratic society of the play was in itself an inversion of natural hierarchy and grotesque. When the fop was humiliated at the end of a play and abused, it amounted to the uncrowning of the clown as king. Bakhtin observes of the medieval tradition that "the abuse and the thrashing are equivalent to a change of costume, to a metamorphosis" (Bakhtin 1984 197). In comedies in which the fop was unpunished at the end of the play, he countered the stabilising effect of the concluding marriage (see chapter 7). Heilman provides a chronological analysis of the fop figure, establishing a basis for the further analysis of the fop stock type (Heilman 1982). The following section is indebted to Heilman's work, but expanded and the focus is placed on the development of the fop's role in the conception of masculinity.

While early Restoration comedies did not lack fools (often foreigners, for example the foolish but loyal Irish servant Teague in Howard's *The Committee; or, The Faithful Irishman*, or the French cook Raggou in John Lacy's *The Old Troop*, which was presumably first acted in 1665 but only printed in 1672), these characters bore only slight resemblance to later fops. Raggou is French and ridiculed as such, but he is described as "slovenly", while later anti-French sentiments in the comedy were expressed by the disdain for delicate and effeminate types of men, qualities that were implied to be French. The earlier comic characters were, broadly speaking, close to the grotesque of the medieval and Renaissance tradition (see above). The perhaps most important playwright of the early Restoration, Dryden, had no interest in fops. While some of his characters have foppish traits, there are no characters that could be labelled fops in his plays (see also Heilman 1982 367). He was not the only one. While we find some fops in the early Restoration, the majority of plays did without them. The lack of excessive, effeminate fops in the early Restoration is in line with the observation of historians who study effeminacy and homosexuality (e.g. Barker-Benfield 1992, Benyon 2001, Carter 1997, King 2004). Effeminacy was not perceived as a political and social problem in the early Restoration. Effeminacy was seen as undesirable and might occasionally be ridiculed, but zealous puritans and debauched cavaliers were of more interest in the early Restoration.

The earliest effeminate fop in the plays analysed here is Woodcock in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668). Although Woodcock does not fit into the later stock type, Shadwell nevertheless demonstrated with his creation of this fool an acute perception for the type of fool that the audience appreciated. Woodcock is only one of three "impertinents" who plague the sullen main character, Stanford. In the rather lengthy description in the *dramatis personae* he is described as "a familiar loving coxcomb that embraces and kisses all men; so used to his familiar endearing expressions that he cannot forbear them in the midst of his anger". The other "coxcombs" are Ninny, "a conceited poet, always troubling men with impertinent discourses of poetry, and the repetition of his own verses" and Sir Positive At-All, "a foolish knight, that pretends to understand everything in the world and will suffer no man to understand everything in his company". All three of them are weak characters who need constant validation by other men (preferably Stanford) while being unable and unwilling to form real bonds. They thus contrast with Stanford, who would be happy to have no company but who has a constant and true friend in Lovel. Woodcock's tendency to kiss other men and call them "dear heart" is clearly a part of his effeminacy not only in the gesture itself but also in its excess. Shadwell marks this practice as also potentially sexually devious (see chapter 5). His other effeminate traits are his cowardice and his tendency to sing and dance whenever the opportunity arises, a characteristic he shares with the poet Ninny. However, none of the male characters in the play seems to be particularly interested in their appearance, which would become an important hallmark of fops (a preoccupation with dressing

was not yet seen as effeminate or ridiculous for an aristocratic man, see above). The three are objects of ridicule, but Stanford's sullenness is portrayed as nearly as inappropriate.

However, Shadwell's later comedies did not develop the type any further. Neander in *The Royal Shepherdess* (1668/69) talks in a pseudo-Petrarchan style and frequently uses a mirror to contemplate his charms. Cleantha calls him a "gaudy Nothing", which fits with later expressions of disdain for the effeminate fop, whose lack of masculinity reduces him to "nothing". Heilman concludes that "he, however, falls into villainy, which is a vast way from fophood" (Heilman 1982 366). Villainy and fophood are not necessarily opposites and in some ways Neander is a predecessor of the later effeminate and vain villain. However, Shadwell was clearly not seriously interested in Neander's masculinity (or lack thereof) but rather in the farcical qualities of effeminacy. There is no indication in the play that Neander's villainy is directly connected to his effeminacy. However, in 1673 William Wycherley brought two prototypes of the later fools onto the stage in his *The Gentleman Dancing Master*, the citizens James Formal and his nephew Mr. Parris. Both are discontent with their place in society and disguise themselves as Don Diego and Monsieur de Paris (see above). In this play, Wycherley foreshadows plays such as Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685) and Baker's *Tunbridge Walks* (1703) in which the follies of fops make it easy for citizens or even servants to pass as members of the gentry or even the aristocracy. The difference is here that James Formal and Mr. Parris pretend to be actual foreigners rather than pretend to be English gentlemen with an affinity for French (or Spanish) culture.

One year after Wycherley's *The Gentleman Dancing Master*, Ravenscroft's play *The Careless Lovers* (1673) presents De Boastado, a character who exhibited most of the features of later fops. He is not as exclusively Francophile as Monsieur de Paris and most of the later fops, but boasts of his travels and his pretended ability to speak several languages. He introduces himself as "Mounsieur, Heiro, Signioro Countalto, Donno D'Boastado" (I.i.91-92). It is likely that Ravenscroft deliberately mangled the words by adding an "o" after "Herr", "Signior" and "Don" to expose Boastado's ignorance and lack of education (countalto appears to be a conflation of Italian "conte" and French "count" with a made-up postfix). In contrast to the fops in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), he is very conscious of his appearance. This is made obvious as soon as he appears: the stage directions for his entrance read "Enter De Boastado and his Man, combing his Wigg, and adjusting his Garniture" (I.i.56). De Boastado is vain and affected but he is not as effeminate as later fops. Like the three fools in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668) he pretends to learning he does not possess and thus apes the ideal man but fails, but he is not presented as a threat to the fabric of masculinity.

The next development in the evolution of the fop followed in 1675 in the form of Wycherley's fop Sparkish in *The Country Wife*. Sparkish is a more developed effeminate fop. He is noticeably less farcical

than the fops in Wycherley's earlier plays, which makes him more threatening. Sparkish has less interest in women than later fops; he even has little interest in his fiancée Alithea, nor can he be suspected of deviant sexual tendencies such as homoeroticism (see chapter 5). Nevertheless, Sparkish is closer to the later model of the effeminate fop than for example Woodcock in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668). The other characters at least imply that he is fond of clothes (I.i.) and he does not drink alcohol, a standard feature of masculine sociability. Like Woodcock, he is a pedant who considers himself to be a wit and seeks the company of "wits" (Harcourt, Dorilant and Horner in the play) who despise him. The pretence to wit is the greatest offence the 1670s fop commits and more serious than his farcical concern with his appearance. Their effeminacy was ridiculous and undesirable but not framed as a serious threat to national stability. In his next play *The Plain Dealer* (1676) Wycherley included two fools, Novel and Lord Plausible, which the *dramatis personae* describe as coxcombs. However, they stand for two different brands of fops. Novel is called "a pert, railing coxcomb and an admirer of novelties, makes love to Olivia", while "My Lord Plausible" is described as "a ceremonious, supple, commending coxcomb, in love with Olivia". Those two sides would later generally be combined in one character. Plausible's foolishness is mainly due to his excessive politeness, another important feature of the fop and one that brings him in close proximity to the polite gentleman. Both share their love of fashion and their concern with their appearance. Manly, the protagonist, calls them "these two Pulvillio Boxes, these Essence/ Bottles" (II 536-37) and of course, they are called "things" (II 552). Manly's friend Freeman goes even further and labels them "Apes and Echoes of/ Men only" (II 488-489). The tone towards Novel and Plausible is sharper than in other comedies, even Wycherley's own. Manly, the protagonist, is blunter than even Horner and scorns the smallest signs of effeminacy or dishonesty. Considering that Wycherly called this impolite protagonist "Manly", he appears to be seriously concerned about the effect politeness had on masculinity in England by 1676. Manly embodies the complete opposite of refinement and politeness.

In the same year as Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer*, 1676, Etherege staged *The Man of Mode*, the first play with a fully formed effeminate fop that presumably established the connection between the term foppery and effeminacy (see above). The subtitle to the play is *Sir Fopling Flutter* and the play is possibly the most sympathetic to its fop character of all the plays analysed here. In the controversy about the play between Steele and Dennis (1712 and 1722 see chapter 2), both call the play *Sir Fopling Flutter*, emphasising the importance of the fop to this play as perceived in the early decades of the 18th century. By putting Sir Fopling Flutter in the subtitle, Etherege makes a point. It can be assumed that the title *Man of Mode* is referring to Dorimant, but it could also refer to Sir Fopling Flutter. He certainly considers himself a man of mode. While celebrating the rake, Etherege also emphasises his proximity to effeminacy and foppery. Sir Fopling Flutter was played by William Smith, a versatile and forceful

leading actor; Sparkish, in Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, on the other hand was portrayed by Jo Haynes, a specialist fool and buffoon (Hughes 1996 6). The casting choice reveals changes in the type of the fop.

Yet another comedy of the year 1676 needs to be mentioned in this context: Behn's *The Town Fop*, which Hughes calls her first "mature" comedy (Hughes 1996 187). The fop, Sir Timothy Tawdrey, is not a light-hearted fool like Sir Fopling. He is described as a "fop-knight"; the word "fop" here still has the connotation of "fool". Like a rake, he spends the first scene of the play railing against marriage; he claims that women like him well enough but admits soon enough that he visits prostitutes, who like him for his money. His intimates are "Sham" and "Sharp". Sir Timothy might be foolish, but the threat to patriarchy and order he causes is serious. At the end of the play, he marries accidentally and part of this threat is neutralized. Sir Timothy wants to have a sham marriage but Sham [sic] organises a real parson. Sir Timothy is ridiculous, but the comedy he provides is bitter. Maybe because she was a woman, Aphra Behn portrayed the fop as well as the rake (see chapter 3) more darkly than most of her contemporaries; Sir Timothy's disdain for marriage and disregard for female virtue is neither casual nor comical. The consequences for women, whether a virtuous girl (Philis, whom he marries) or a prostitute (Betty Flauntit, his kept mistress who continues to work in a brothel) are shown to be destructive.

Thomas Otway included two fops in his 1678 comedy *Friendship in Fashion* (which also features not one but three rakes). The fops are named Caper and Saunter, which hints at another characteristic of the refined effeminate fop: the tendency to sing and dance affectedly in every situation, thereby undercutting any seriousness. Their connection to the medieval fool is obvious. For example, Saunter "*Walks up and down with an affected motion*" after he vows that he does not wish to be in love and write sonnets and fight duels with rivals (I.i.352). His rejection of sexuality emasculates him and his affected motion underlines his status as a fool. Only a fool would not wish to have intrigues, to marry and to fight. Saunter provides an example of everything a man should not be. Saunter and Caper end up being bound, "*their hands tied behind 'em, fools cap on their heads. Caper with one leg tied up and Saunter gagged*" (V.785). There is no real reason for this violence towards them in the plot apart from Goodvile's annoyance with them. But Otway sends a message about effeminate men by treating these two fops like fools.

However, after this promising beginning in the 1670s, playwrights in the 1680s, during the Exclusion Crisis and the political tensions leading to the Glorious Revolution, were barely interested in the figure of the fop. John Crowne's eponymous fop Sir Courtly Nice in *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685) is the only noteworthy fop of the decade. While the comedy is named after Sir Courtly, he has possibly the least stage time of all main characters. He only appears in Act III although the other characters discuss him

several times. Sir Courtly is "nice", that is, fastidious, about virtually every aspect of his life. He refuses, for instance, to drink wine after he sees how the grapes are mashed with bare feet in France (III.i.), an implication that not even France is refined enough for the English fop anymore. Sir Courtly is no Francophile; he accuses them of being "nasty dogs" who poison the English with their dirty wine. His counterpart is Surly. Surly is not unlike Manly in Wycherley's *Plain Dealer* and like Manly, he puts his trust in the wrong person, namely Sir Courtly. The fop's first name "Courtly" is certainly intentional in this politically tense decade and might be a direct stab against the supposedly effeminate manners at the royal court. Sir Courtly Nice is very insistent on his quality as a gentleman and boasts to a servant that he is recognised as such everywhere. He has, rather remarkably, more insight than most fops and does not claim to be a wit. In fact, in his opinion "Men of Quality are above Wit" (III.i.). Overall, Sir Courtly Nice is not as farcical as the early fops of the Restoration and he is also not a light-hearted warning against foppishness as Sir Foppington, for example. He serves as an expression of uneasiness with court politics and the behaviour of courtiers close to the king (at this time Charles II governed without parliament, having dissolved it).

Hughes argues that there was an increased satire of the aristocracy after the Glorious Revolution in 1688: "There is possibly a glimpse of social tensions in the increased satire of the aristocracy, though what tensions are being reflected is less certain" (Hughes 1996 333). Those tensions are at leat partially to be found the crisis of aristocratic masculinity and the growing distrust of citizens in their government. In contrast to the drama of the early Restoration, which celebrated the monarchy and safely satirised Puritans, the satire in these post-Revolution comedies was less overtly political. For example Crowne's comedy *The Married Beau* (1694) is based on what Lois Bueler terms "The Tested Woman Plot" (Bueler 2001), the trope of a husband (or prospective lover) testing the virtue of his wife/intended. Lovely, the fop protagonist, is determined to test his wife's fidelity by asking his friend, Polidore, to try and seduce her. Staves points out that Lovely's motives are not only his vanity but that he is "also affected by the increasing demands that marriage partners choose each other for personal and subjective reasons" (Staves 1982 423). He is also, however, affected by the necessity to prove his own virility. Polidore fails to seduce Mrs. Lovely; instead of being satisfied with his wife's virtue, however, Lovely mocks his friend for being unable to seduce a woman. Polidore is stung and tries again, this time revealing the plot to Mrs. Lovely. She becomes angry and agrees to betray her husband. Lovely's plan leads to him becoming an unwitting cuckold. Crowne mocks the foolishness of suspicious husbands who lead their wife to temptation. The play is based on a story in Don Quixote ("El Curioso Impertinente"), but is also reminiscent of Sparkish's folly in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675).

Cibber, who, a discussed above, was greatly impressed by the actor Mountford's portrayal of fops (Cibber 1966 I 128-129), wrote his first play *Love's Last Shift* in 1696 to create the role of a fop for

himself. He can be credited with the re-imagination of the fop, the first significant reshaping of the fop since Etherege's Sir Fopling. Brown seeks an explanation for the re-imagination by claiming that "in Cibber's era experimentation was unavoidable: The disposition of comedy was changing, and most of the character types had to be modified in the direction of sentimentality, on one hand, and laughter deriving more from farce than from wit, on the other" (Brown 1982 31). In Sir Novelty's case, however, Cibber does the exact opposite; Sir Novelty is the least sentimental character in the play, but he is too developed and too aware of his individuality to be merely farcical. Cibber proved in his first play that he knew the tastes of the audience as well as his own strength in performance; Sir Novelty was an instant hit. Even when we only read the play, the figure of the flamboyant Sir Novelty takes over the play and until Loveless' flowery reconciliation scene with his wife, he eclipses the rake Loveless. Sir Novelty is as developed as the other characters in the play and while he is not deeply involved in the plot, he makes frequent appearances. Although Berinthia soon assures Elder Worthy that he is wrong, Elder Worthy regards Sir Novelty as a serious threat to his courtship. The effeminate fop is portrayed as an obstacle to the formation of a stable marriage, which was the foundation of a stable society (see chapter 7). In Vanbrugh's response to *Love's Last Shift*, *The Relapse* (1696), Sir Novelty has been ennobled and becomes Lord Foppington. Vanbrugh's Lord Foppington is a more sinister figure than Cibber's Sir Novelty. He participates in the second plot of the play as the villain as his excessive selfishness hurts his younger brother. The excessive selfishness of Lord Foppington is less innocent than that of Sir Novelty. Cibber revived Lord Foppington for his second original comedy, *The Careless Husband* (1704), where he makes Lord Foppington the friend of Sir Charles Easy, fully integrating him in the male circle of the play, which creates a suspiciousness towards Sir Charles from the first scene onwards. Lord Foppington is now married, just like the rake-hero of the play, Sir Charles Easy. Sir Charles famously reforms (see chapter 7); the fop is unreformable. Nevertheless, although Cibber readily accepts Vanbrugh's ennoblement of Sir Novelty, his portrayal is still less sinister than Vanbrugh's. Although he hints at his cruelty towards his wife and his brother, neither are ever on stage and thus do not evoke pity.

Congreve's first (and last) seriously developed fops are Witwoud and Petulant in *The Way of the World* (1700). Witwoud's brother is the play's country gentleman, Sir Wilfull, who berates his brother as "Becravated, and Beperiwig'd" and asserts that "I conjectur'd you were a Fop, since you began to change the Stile of your Letters, and write in a scrap of Paper gilt round the Edges" (III.i.). As Sir Wilfull is a ridiculous character himself, this censure is softened; a country gentleman generally considered every man of the town as effeminate. As it turns out, Witwoud and Petulant are effeminate but harmless. Like the fops of the 1670s, they provide some light-hearted amusement to the wittier characters without disturbing the social order. When Witwoud and Petulant go to the Mall in order to

be “severe” in commenting on women who walk by (I.530-33), Mirabell attempts to convince them that to harass ladies is bad manners and disturbs virtuous women, but Petulant insists that if the ladies are put out of countenance, it shows they are not innocent. Millamant, Mirabell’s fiancée, concludes that “Where modesty’s ill manners, ‘tis but fit/ That impudence and malice pass for wit” (I.552-553). Throughout the play Witwoud and Petulant continue to annoy the protagonists and display bad manners, but they are otherwise harmless and provide comical elements, especially in the last scene when they do not understand what is happening. *The Way of the World* is indulgent towards rakes and fops; Congreve does not see either group as a serious threat to society.

The fop Sir John Roverhead in Mary Pix’s *The Beau Defeated* (1700) is less harmless and serves as the distorted image of aristocratic manners. He appears throughout the play as a fop very much in the tradition of Cibber’s Sir Novelty or Vanbrugh’s Lord Foppington. He even uses Foppington’s catch-phrase “stop my vitals”, thus linking the characters. Sir John is overly concerned with his appearance. He is confused when Lady Landsworth rejects him and asks his man, Chris, in confusion “I think, Chris, I am nicely/ dressed today” (I.i.347-348). When Chris suggests that Lady Landworth might prefer “the inward man” (a Quaker’s term), he answers “She’s a fool, that’s certain” (I.i.349-350). Later, when Sir John introduces himself to the country gentleman Elder Clerimont, the other man exclaims “What a plague, ye have run your mop into my face/ and e’en choked me with your powder” (IV.ii.266-267). Slightly later Elder Clerimont calls him “another o’th’libken souls/ a high wind or a shower frights into fits of the/mother.” (IV.ii.276-277). “Fits of the mother” meant hysterics, “o’th’libken” is a more obscure word. Elizabeth Kubek, who edited the play for the *Broadview Anthology of Restoration & Early Eighteenth Century Drama*, assumes that it is a dialect version of “libben”, meaning castrated. Like other fops, he was thus labelled as having no virility and lacking the essential qualities of a man (see chapter 5). In a twist at the end of the play, it is revealed that Sir John Roverhead is not, in fact, Sir John Roverhead but merely a footman who took the name of a country gentleman who never went to town. “Lady Bassett”, the former mistress of a gentleman, has taught him the ways of fine gentlemen. While the first impression of this twist might be that “real” noblemen are absolved from effeminacy as embodied by John Roverhead, it can be argued that it is instead a broader attack against aristocratic manners. It is implied that Sir Roverhead is the caricature of noblemen, as he emulates their behaviour. If, however, a footman could ape the manners so well and the other nobleman in the play is a country gentleman only interested in dogs, these men do not appear to be fit to govern and their masculinity thus lacks what the patriarchal system needs to continue. Mr. Rich, the city merchant, on the other hand, is reasonable if not always successful in persuading his sister-in-law and his daughter to follow his advice. At the end of the play, he has re-established his influence over the two women and established his superior masculinity.

In contrast to Sir Roverhead, Lord Promise in William Burnaby's *The Modish Husband* (1702) is a courtier with sufficient influence at court to provide the husband of his mistress, Lord Cringe, with an apartment and a position at court. Lord Promise, played by Cibber, engages his friend Lionel to make love to his wife so he can woo Lady Cringe at leisure. The plan backfires; Lord Promise, the influential courtier, is not only effeminate and selfish, he is also unable to successfully plot and thus a failure as a man in power. Lord Promise, as a fop protagonist who is unpunished at the end, diverges from some of the established stereotypes of the foppish personality, which might have been a reason for the play's failure.

As observed in the previous chapter on the development of the rake as a type on stage, the figures of the rake and the fop increasingly grew more prominent as libertinism became less socially tolerable and as the apprehension of effeminacy grew. Williams claims: "the abused and rejected fops became less common as a dramatic figure; in his place, the more socially accepted tolerated fop assumed a primary role on the Restoration stage. In many ways, the comic theatre of the Restoration grew up with the advent of a new century, and with it, so did the fop" (Williams 1995 165). That sentiment is only true in Cibber's comedies (and even there it needs to be qualified) and only if one considers a character such as Sir Harry Wildair in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699) as fops. The comedies overall had become less violent in content (see chapters 6); the farcical corporal punishment for fops had become outmoded, but the treatment of later fops is often harsh in other ways.

According to both Staves (1982) and Senelick (1990 44), Thomas Baker's *Tunbridge Walks, or The Yeoman of Kent* (1703) brought a new kind of fop to the stage in the character of Maiden. His name already reveals his extreme effeminacy. He is described as "a Nice-Fellow that values himself upon his Effeminacies". His homosexuality is barely veiled (Staves 1982 415), which brought a new element to the fop's deviancy (see chapter 5). Like Sir John Roverhead, he was not born into the aristocracy, but started out as an apprentice to a milliner. A wealthy gentleman then left him his estate which allowed him to become the fop he is. In contrast to Sir John Roverhead, it does not appear that Maiden has had to learn effeminate manners. This type did not catch on, however. Fops continued to follow the tradition of Sir Fopling and Lord Foppington. Homosexuality or extreme effeminacy do not dominate the following plays.

In the following years fops appeared in sometimes differing facets without persistent development of the character. Farquhar's Captain Brazen in *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) is one of the first examples of the military fops of the period. Farquhar's Wildair in *The Constant Lovers* (1699) is also an officer, but while his Wildair is a rake with foppish qualities, Brazen has none of Wildair's redeeming qualities such as wit. Brazen provides comic relief at many junctures but he essentially embodies all that

Farquhar considered to be wrong within the structure of the army. Nevertheless, he is noticeably less effeminate than, for example, Lord Foppington. In Cibber's third original comedy, *The Lady's Last Stake* (1707), Cibber opted against including a fop of Foppington's mould. He himself played Lord George Brilliant, a character who has similarities to Wildair (see chapter 3). Williams compares them by labelling Wildair a "foppish-rake" and Lord George a "rakish-fop" (Williams 1995 178). It takes nine years more until another fully formed fop appears in Christopher Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1716): Sir Amourous Vainwit. His name hints at the fop's love for intrigues (although Colonel Manly believes that Sir Amorous has never actually had an intrigue) and his empty wit. "Vain" of course also hints at his love for fashion. This fop is another fop who was low-born. He is described as the son of a merchant who inherited money; these low-born fops may reveal an uneasiness with the notion of politeness; if manners were the passport to elite circles, undesirable men like foppish upstarts could get in.

In Richard Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), the fop, Cimberton, has only a small role compared to previous comedies. Cimberton is a mixture between a country gentleman, a fop and a pedantic scholar (in contrast to some earlier fops who only pretended to be learned, he has book knowledge). He is all that is undesirable in a prospective husband; apart from not even mentioning physical violence and not given the appearance of being a violent man. True to the tone of the entire comedy, the ridicule heaped on Cimberton is subdued and he himself does not appear very threatening. In *The Conscious Lovers* Steele was more concerned with presenting the right type of man (Belvil Junior, Mr. Sealand) than to ridicule the wrong men. In this world, the rationality and sensibility of the good men erases the threat of the others.

When Senelick claims that "The Fopling Flutters and Foppingtons are patrician narcissists, so fixated on their own persons, that they are indifferent to others" (Senelick 1990 47), it is not quite clear to which fops – apart from Maiden (in Baker's *Tunbridge Walks* 1703), who is a special case – he is comparing Sir Fopling Flutter and Lord Foppington. Garrick's fop in the 1750s (*The Male Coquette* 1757) is as much a patrician narcissist as Sir Fopling and Lord Foppington. Senelick speculates that John Leigh's comedy *Kensington Gardens, Or The Pretenders* (1718) was unsuccessful "due in part perhaps to the growing unpopularity of the effeminate, whose identification with the sodomite was more evident to the general public" (Senelick 1990 50). Both effeminate fops in that play, Varnish and Bardach, are extremely effeminate and, indeed, quite clearly non-heterosexual. I am not aware of a successful play until Garrick's in the 1750s which featured an extremely effeminate fop. Plays such as *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685) or *The Careless Husband* (1704) remained popular, but it is likely that the performances were adapted to changing tastes. The fop nevertheless remained popular as a character after the period analysed here. David Garrick, for example, played Lord Foppington and Clodio in

Cibber's *Love Makes the Man; or the Fop's Fortune* and wrote the part of a fop for himself in *Miss in Her Teens* (Staves 1982 416).

Breeches parts and effeminacy

When actresses were allowed on stage after the Restoration, playwrights soon discovered the titillating possibilities of breeches parts. The pretty legs of an actress could be revealed and add an incentive for men to attend the theatre. The idea of a woman dressing up as a man was by no means new, of course, as Shakespeare had exploited it in more than one play. Moreover, in *Twelfth Night* as well as *As You Like It* women fall in love with the supposed gentlemen (the difference was, of course, that on the restoration stage all the characters were portrayed by male actors). The same dynamic was popular in Restoration comedies. However, breeches parts not only offered erotic and comic possibilities, they could also be exploited for ideological purposes. If a woman could be taken for a man by the male characters, that also said something about the flawed nature of some forms of masculinity, usually that of the fop, which could be so easily mimicked. It demonstrated the danger of the fop's effeminacy, which threatened to turn the world upside down and threatened the patriarchal subjugation of women. While the breeches parts were entertaining and enticing, they also carried a darker message.

The connection of women in breeches and fops is evident in every breeches role; no matter how the women attempted to present themselves, they were always considered to be effeminate by the other men in the play. While men might not be able to see through the disguise, partly, it is implied because fops have blurred the boundaries, they can detect the unmanliness in the woman and associate that with fops. In Cibber's sketch of Mrs. Monfort (later Mrs. Verbruggen) he praises not only her acting skills in portraying a variety of female characters, but also remarks:

> nor was her Humour limited to her Sex; for, while her Shape permitted, she was a more adroit pretty Fellow than is usually seen upon the stage: Her easy Air, Action, Mien, and Gesture quite chang'd from the Quoif to the cock'd Hat and Cavalier in fashion. People were so fond of seeing her a Man, that when the Part of Bays in the Rehearsal had for some time lain dormant, she was desired to take it up, which I have seen her act with all the true coxcombly Spirit and Humour that the Sufficiency of the Character required. (I.167)

Cibber does not mean to say that Mrs. Monfort was good at playing any male role; he is talking specifically about fops. The terms "pretty fellow" and "true coxcombly spirit" are not ambigious. A woman playing an effeminate fop made his status obvious; he was not quite a man, not masculine enough to be equated even with men at the bottom of the hierarchy. They were also not, however, like women: Mrs. Monfort changed her "Action, Mean, and Gesture" to portray a fop.

Steele's *The Tender Husband* (1705) demonstrates this exemplarily. The play has some similarity to *The Married Beau* (Crowne 1694), although the husband in this case is a polite gentleman, Clerimont. The fop of the play is actually his mistress Fainlove, whom he convinces to dress up as a man to test his francophile wife's fidelity. Clerimont reassures Fainlove, when she protests that she won't go "among the Men" in her disguise:

> *Clerimont Senior*: […] I don't design you to personate a real man, you are only to be a pretty Gentleman – Not to be of any Use or Consequence in the World, as to your self, but merely as property to others, such as you see now and then have a Life in the Intail of a great Estate that seems to have come into the World only to be Taggs in the Pedigree of a Wealthy House – You must have seen many of that species. (I.i.32-37)

Steele, the Whig reformer of manners, has his hero Clerimont senior deny the masculinity of "pretty gentlemen" (effeminate fops) and identify them as elder sons and future patriarchs of the old great families, indicating the decline of said families and giving a not so subtle hint that those men might not be well suited to determine the future. They are, despite their families, of no use or consequence in the world. Their position in the entail actually effeminises them as they are "property to others" like women. Fainlove further effeminises the pretty Gentlemen by emphasising their softness, their public display and their narcissism. Despite this dialogue, Fainlove is not portrayed as flamboyant as Sir Fopling or Sir Novelty/Lord Foppington for example. The soft and effeminate quality was presumably already implied by the fact that Fainlove was, in fact, a woman. Later in the play Mrs. Clerimont demonstrates that she is reformable, by roundly denouncing the masculinity of Fainlove, in the scene when Fainlove comes to her closet by her appointment.

> Mrs. Clerimont: O young Gentleman, you are mightily mistaken if you think such Animals as you, and pretty *Beau Titmouse*, and pert *Billy Butterfly*, tho' I suffer you to come in, and play about my Rooms, are any ways in competition with a Man whose Name one would wear. (V.i.56-60)

She then also adds, however, that men one can respect such as Mr. Clerimont are not suitable for light dalliances for which "you things are more proper" (V.i.65). Mrs. Clerimont objectifies effeminate men in a way in which female characters in the period were hardly ever objectified. Being somehow outside the human race ("Animals") they are mere objects, whose play an amused lady might watch in the same manner as she might watch the antics of kittens or monkeys.

In Charles Johnson's 1711 comedy *The Generous Husband*, the female protagonist, Fictitia dresses up as man to be able to get closer to her beloved Veramant. While her servant Viola (alias Valentine) enjoys having "hector'd," "bounc'd" and "bully'd half the young Milksops in town" (II.i.), Fictitia remains more delicate. Gender is thus also intricately linked to class in the play. The delicate Fictitia can

impersonate an effeminate aristocrat, but her low-class servant is able to impersonate an entirely different kind of man, one who would be able to bully and beat a fop. In Viola's/Valentine's low-class violence Johnson thus also hints at the lack of inherent masculinity in violence. When Fictitia sees Veramant entering the room, she turns to the mirror to "adjust" herself. Veramant rallies her:

> *Veramant*: Hah my Philadel! my Hylas! Ever busy in Contemplation of thy own dear Self: Thou art a pretty Toy, the veriest Fop.
> *Secundine*: He was made a Trifle for the fair Sex, as their Fans or Snuff-boxes; not so much for use, as to play with. (II.i.).

Like Mrs Clerimont, Veramant and Secundine consider fops to be unhuman, to be mere objects. As the audience knows, however, Philadel is actually Fictitia, a woman who is in love with Veramant. She is thus not in the habit of continually adjusting herself in the mirror, but it is an unconscious gesture to preen herself for the man she loves. The two men misread Fictitia's adjustment in the mirror, but for the audience the difference between her adjustment and that of the fop is apparent.

In Act IV Fictitia pretends to have an affair with herself as Veramant confesses his love for Fictitia to her. Veramant's angry response reveals how effeminate he considers Philadel/Fictitia:

> *Veramant*: Hey da – What's to be done now – – Why my little Ganymede, are you angry – Your Mistress – I shou'd as soon be jealous of a Picture – Thou Dwarf – Thou Wren – Dost thou pretend to Rival me – Prithee my little Cock-Sparrow don't dwell so: Upon my Honour, cou'd Fictitia descend so low to like thee, I wou'd resign my Right in her to thee with Indignation. (IV.ii.).

In calling the supposed Philadel Ganymede, Veramant suggests that he considers Philadel to be homosexual. He also, of course, dwells on her appearance as she is presumably a good deal smaller than him. Veramant also speaks in anger here; even though he insults Philadel, he usually considers "him" to be worthy of his own company. However, he considers no women to be fit to be his wife, who would think a fop worthy of her company.

The breeches roles confirm that effeminacy as exhibited by the fop was truly outside the gender binary. Most female characters who dressed up as male were less effeminate than a fop. Philadel/Fictitia might come close, but even she manages to act less effeminately than Lord Foppington or Maiden for example. An exception to the rule that disguised women were habitually considered to be fops is Silvia in Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1706). Silvia disguises herself to enlist with Captain Plume. In her role as a man Silvia acts as a libertine. One of Silvia's first actions is to take a country girl, Sarah, away from the man she loves to lie with her during the night. She pretends to be a rake to attract Captain Plume's interest and the characters in the play treat her as rake rather than as a fop. In 1706,

however, the notion of rakes and fops had already become inflated and rakes were often considered to be effeminate as well.

Conclusion

The figure of the aristocratic fop was always more than simply a foolish character. The fop was the focal point of complex and intersecting discourses of courtesy, politeness, refinement, class, xenophobia, gender/effeminacy and sodomy/homosexuality. The ways in which those discourses influenced each other and met in the figure of the fop would merit its own study, but all of them connected to masculinity. In his most simple function, the fop often serves as a foil for the protagonist. By juxtaposing a man to a fop, the other character's masculinity is underlined. In Mary Pix's *The Beau Defeated* (1700) Lady Landworth encounters Sir John Roverhead in passing and remarks, "There's a foil to my hero! What a languishing air the/ fop put on!" (III.ii.15). Indeed, the only reason Mrs. Rich and Sir John walk across the stage and then disappear again in this scene seems to be to provide a foil to Lady Landsworth and Clerimont. The fop was a satire on contemporary trends in manners and fashions donned in particular by the aristocracy. The fop's egocentrism and his obsession with surface appearances rendered a useful participation in civic duties and national politics impossible; few characters on stage ever engaged in such serious business but the fop is one character who is obviously portrayed as unable to do so. But the effeminate fop was not a direct reaction to the court of Charles II or indeed James II, as the rake was. In those first decades after the Restoration, when the rake flourished on stage, most of the playwrights were sympathetic to the court and even those who were not (like Shadwell) included a broader range of fools in their comedies than later playwrights did. Etherege, whose Sir Fopling Flutter in *The Man of Mode* (1676) was one of the most popular fops, was part of the circle of court libertines and his depiction of the fop is a gentle parody rather than a satire.

In the history of this stage character, some common traits emerge. Only around 1700 had the figure of the fop become established as a standard, although all his attributes were already present in Sir Fopling Flutter in 1676. One of the key "crimes" of the fop is a staple in literary productions of any genre: his pretence to knowledge or wit that he does not, in fact, possess. Names such as Witwoud and Sir Amorous Vainwit hint at this vice. The fop understands, on a superficial level, that wit is an important attribute of a man during the Restoration period and beyond. Men did not only prove their valour on the battlefield, they would far more frequently banter intellectually. The virtue of wit was to some extent gender-neutral. The attractive female protagonists also had to possess wit. Wit was the weapon in the battle of the sexes. Of course, eventually a truly masculine man would outwit his female counterpart. The fop's lack of wit was thus not part of his effeminacy, as a lack of wit was not something commonly attributed to women. His lack of wit is rather connected to his role as the stage fool. Often,

however, there is more to it than mere farce. By connecting an effeminate character with a lack of wit (or, in plainer terms, stupidity) playwrights made a point about effeminacy. The fop's second characteristic, which is more striking on stage than in the mere reading of the plays, is his vanity and his love for fashion. Many fop names are derived from this particular trait: Sir Novelty Fashion and Dapper make the character's obsession with fashion clear.

The fop, just like the rake, was treated increasingly more harshly on stage. As politeness emerged as a new touchstone for hegemonic masculinity, the fop began to embody, especially to the Whigs, a facet of aristocratic masculinity that could be dangerously close to the refinement required of the polite gentlemen, without any of the merits. According to Senelick, the fact that Maiden, for example, a fop who is as openly homosexual as could possibly be portrayed, was not isolated but a part of society points at a greater tolerance towards sodomites. However, it is more likely an attack on aristocratic values and tastes that someone as effeminate as Maiden could be part of aristocratic circles and indeed make it to these circles by virtue of his effeminacy (a wealthy gentleman, who was possibly his lover, left him his estate). Opinions among scholars are divided. Williams believes that

> while many of the "witwould" fops were severely censured and rejected for their social folly, many Restoration comedies treated the character of the fop with a degree of social toleration that negated the need for his total exclusion from fashionable society. Instead, the fops in these comedies were allowed to join in the creation of the new social order that emerged at play's end despite their social folly. (Williams 1995 125)

The following three chapters will demonstrate that this presumes too much kindness towards the fop and a more idealistic conception of a comedy's ending than is warranted. The fop's continued presence and continued effeminacy at the end of a play rather undercut the happy endings; he serves as a reminder that while some men can be reclaimed to socially desirable masculinity and while marriage, which stabilises the social balance, is successfully negotiated (and often concluded), the threat of effeminacy remains. In these last scenes the fop also serves more obviously as a foil to those male protagonists who reformed (or learned another lesson in rationality); their transformation becomes more significant because the need for the ideal type of men is accentuated by the presence of fop, who stands for everything the male hero rejected.

05: Relationships and Masculinity

Friendship

In masculinity studies, independent of the chronological and geographical focus of a specific study, bonds between men are a key focus. The term "homosociality" was introduced in the 1970s to analyse the range of relationships ranging from non-romantic or platonic same-sex relationships to sexual or romantic same-sex ones and became central in gender studies after Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick published her work *Between Men* in 1985. Michael Flood, who writes about young heterosexual men in contemporary Australia, observes that "masculinity studies argues for powerful links between homosociality and masculinity: men's lives are said to be highly organized by relations between men. Men's practice of gender has been theorized as a homosocial enactment, in which the performance of manhood is in front of and granted by other men" (Flood 2008 342). What is true of young Australian men in the 20th century can also be observed on the stage in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. While virility and seduction were essential for the affirmation of masculine gender identity, and will be discussed in the following sections, the success thereof had to be witnessed and recognised by male friends. Shows of virility or seductions that remained strictly in the private sphere were worthless for a man's assertion of his masculinity. The concept of hegemonic masculinity already implies that a man's masculinity can only be determined in relation to other men. One function of the relations between men was the perpetuation of patriarchy; Connell and Messerschmidt observe that the dominance of men and subordination of women "is open to challenge and requires considerable effort to maintain. […] There is detailed work that shows the tactics of maintenance through the exclusion of women […]" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 844). However, "[t]o sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 844). This chapter will explore the ways in which such policing of men was conducted in relationships between men or by showing off to other men, but will exclude the relationship of a man to his wife, which was influenced by other factors as well and will be discussed in chapter 7.

In most comedies, friendship between male characters is prominently portrayed. The rakes had friends who aided each other in their intrigues, gossiped among each other and reaffirmed each other's status. While these bonds of friendship between young (virile) men were often portrayed positively, it was rare for a male character to have a meaningful bond with an older male figure. Carole Pateman argues that in the late 17th century a rearrangement of male authority from *paternal* patriarchy to *fraternal* patriarchy occurred (see also chapter 2). Paternal patriarchy accepted the father as the absolute authority over his wife and children, while fraternal patriarchy insisted on the basic equality

of all men (at least British men from the middle class upwards) in the public sphere (Pateman 1988 33 ff). The attacks against old men in Restoration comedies attest to this observation. However, even though the function of the father was more often than not either eliminated or replaced by a bond to a male friend, male bonds in comedies were rarely equal, especially in plays before the 1690s. One of the men would clearly be the leader.

Noteworthy throughout the period is the exclusive quality of male friendship. In most plays there were no more than three close male friends; two good friends were more usual (to name just a few, Howard's *The Committee* (1662), Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671), Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1685), Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love* (1690), Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), Cibber's *The Careless Husband* (1704), Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707), Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1716) and Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722)). Part of the reason for this limit is the genre. The comedies were short, and the space on stage and the number of actors were limited. The focus of the plot had to be romance, as the audience expected from a comedy. But it also hinted at the exclusiveness of such a friendship. In the plays, the ability to form a close, equal bond is indicative of a character's masculinity. A woman who masquerades as a man often forms a superficial friendship with the man she loves, but she is always, even while assumed to be male, in an inferior position in the friendship. This holds true throughout the period, in Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer* (1676) as well as in Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love* (1690) and Johnson's *The Generous Husband* (1711). However, Lucy (Sir Anthony) in *Sir Anthony Love* (1690) decides that the position of a subordinated friend still trumps that of a wife and refuses to marry. Fops had the same fate as women in the constellation of constant male friendships.

The importance of male friendship in the comedies decreased between 1660 and 1728 with heterosocial relationships, especially to a wife, gaining importance. The function of male friends to engender wit on stage waned with the decreasing importance of wit, but whenever wit was central in the comedy, the "gay couple" hardly engendered more wit than male friends. While Harriet and Dorimant enjoy witty bantering in *The Man of Mode* (1676), Dorimant also taunts his friends (Medley and Bellair), and with his friends he mercilessly derides the fop, Sir Fopling Flutter. In Aphra Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1685) which features extraordinarily witty women, the men are just as witty among themselves. In later comedies, there was hardly any wit between the main couple. Most of the wit was generated by and between men. Their wittiness was explicitely connected to a valuable and normative masculine quality, which was the touchstone for his claim to hegemonic masculinity: his virility. It was not only expressed by his sexual feats but metaphorically in his ability to banter and rally. The rakes in the earlier comedies, especially those of Etherege and Wycherley, excelled in their wittiness. Cibber's rakes, such as Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) and Sir Easy in *The Careless Husband* (1704), were less witty. Fops were marked by their attempt to be witty, but their failure to understand wit. Sparkish

in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) continually considers the insults of other men to be "rallying" as does Sir Fopling in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) and Sir Novelty Fashion/Lord Foppington in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), *The Careless Husband* (1704) as well as in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1676).

In the early Restoration period libertines were very close to their male friends, to an extent that still puzzles scholars. John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, expressed the relations between affairs with women, friendship with men and pederasty with his page in one of his more misogynistic songs, which starts out with the line "Love a woman? You're an ass!" (the Poem has no title). The third and fourth stanza cast light on his male friendships:

> Farewell, woman! I intend
> Henceforth every night to sit
> With my lewd, well-natured friend,
> Drinking to engender wit.
> Then give me health, wealth, mirth, and wine,
>
> And, if busy love entrenches,
> There's a sweet soft page of mine
> Does the trick worth forty wenches.
> (lines 9-16)

It is evident that his friendship to the "lewd, well-natured friend" does not have an explicitly sexual component. It is equally apparent in the entire poem that his relationship with his wife is completely outside the pleasure of either friendship or lust. His friendship with a man is not sterile; with the help of wine they "engender wit", the hallmark of the rake (see chapter 3). In Rochester's world male friendships breed wit, which is as important to a libertine aristocrat as male heirs (or even more important because it furthered their own reputation more immediately). Wit is ephemeral; it needs to be constantly engendered. In the act of engendering/fathering a child, the partner (the mother) is treated merely a conduit; the engendering of wit presupposes equals. It is noteworthy that he does not propose to overstep the boundaries of platonic friendship with his friends. His homosexual desires (if we can label them as such) are restricted or redirected to his page, a young servant.

In Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675) the rakes' disregard for tradition and morals and the energy of their violence has an almost manic quality. The only bond they have is that among themselves; and to reassert it, they have to commit ever more outrageous crimes. Don John is the driving force but he is also driven by his followers, as he has to justify his status as their leader by being even more brutal, even more ruthless than them. They have destroyed the bonds of family, as Don John has either killed his father or hired someone to kill his father; Don Lopez has cut his older brother's throat, and Don Antonio has raped and impregnated his sisters (I.i.70-80). Don John calmly explains that he had to kill

his father, as "his whole/design was to debar me of my pleasures. He kept his purse from me …." (I.i.81-83). While Don John is clearly the leader of their little pack, Don Lopez and Don Antonio have already shown their willingness to disregard any bonds and so Don John's position is fragile. He has no real control over his friends and can only continue to be the leader by being ever more outrageously amoral and violent than his followers. Shadwell frames this attack on patriarchy as negative. The homosocial bonds between men of equal status cannot replace the old ties of family and fealty because they are imbued with anxiety and struggles to establish a frail hierarchy.

Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) portrays the opposite picture of male bonding. Its main character Dorimant also has two followers: Medley and Bellair. In contrast to Don Lopez and Don Antonio they are not portrayed as lesser versions of the hero, Dorimant. While they both admire him, they do not strive to emulate him, and Medley insists on an equal relationship with Dorimant. Bellair is not even a rake. Although he has little respect for his father, too, this does not lead him to destructive behaviour. He treats Dorimant (and Medley) as older, wiser brothers and has replaced his bumbling father with these modern, masculine figures, an ideal of fraternal patriarchy. Bellair's father, Old Bellair, directly threatens his son's happiness. He descends on the town and sends his son a letter informing him that he has made a match for him, and if his son does not comply with his wishes, he will disinherit him and marry again to produce another heir. Before Young Bellair can react, his father already falls in love with Emilia, a young girl, and is on the verge of marrying despite his earlier words; however, Emilia is actually in love with his son. In this comedy, it is the father's behaviour that needs to be corrected, not that of his son.

Many Restoration plays echoed *The Man of Mode* in its construction of male friendship; namely the substitution of family ties with ties between male friends of the same class (the aristocracy) and the superiority of those ties to the romantic relationships at the centre of the plot. Examples are Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer* (1676) and Behn's *The Rover* (1677). Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688) is a late example. While Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686) was in some ways old-fashioned (the dubious moral of the cuckolding plot and the general bawdiness), it places a greater value on the relationship of the male protagonists with their lovers than earlier comedies (even her own *The Rover*). Some comedies such as Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695) gave virtually equal weight to male friendship and the bond between lovers. In *Love for Love* Scandal is closer to Valentine than either his father or his brother, but it is Angelica who ultimately helps him out of his impoverished situation by preventing his father from disinheriting him. Patriarchy is undermined because of the flawed nature of patrimony and because of the self-centredness of men. Only Angelica's willing submission to Valentine saves the established hierarchy between men and women.

Two notable exceptions to these characters celebrating male friendship are Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) and Florio in Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683). Both Horner and Florio feign impotence to achieve their sexual goals, and both do not trust their male friends enough to let them in on the secret. Rather than celebrating their successful plot with their friends, they enjoy their affairs in private. The difference between them is that Horner pursues several women, while Florio's ploy is designed to enable him to have an affair with one specific woman. In *The Country Wife* (1675), there is a strong bond between two male equals, Harcourt and Dorilant. They try to keep Horner included while excluding the fop Sparkish, who desperately attempts to join them. While Horner's antics are amusing, the play ultimately privileges Harcourt's balance between his male circle and his courtship of Alithea. Horner's privileging his shallow affairs with women and Sparkish's exaggerated privileging of potential male friends over his fiancée Alithea are both extremes (Wycherley is thus not on the same page as his fellow court wit, the 2nd Earl of Rochester, see above). In Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683), on the other hand, the configuration of male relations is more complex. Florio and Artall belong to the same libertine circle, but do not trust each other enough to reveal their plans to each other. The only character who is privy to Florio's scheme is his servant. The man Florio cuckolds, the Podesta (the chief magistrate of Naples), is not like Mr. Pinchwife in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), however. The Podesta's flaw is that he places too much trust in other men as long as they claim to be Whigs, while Pinchwife trusts no one. In Crowne's world, the only ties of relevance are allegiance to the king and sexual attraction. Male bonding has lost its value and only the *deus ex machina* intervention of a far-away court can save order.

While not all comedies which devalued domesticity automatically valued homosocial bonds, comedies which staged the advantages of domesticity did not necessarily portray the value of male friendship as lesser. Edward Burns claims that in the 1690s "friendship itself is subtly different in function. The tighter order of respectable life has displaced those loose groups of gentleman drinkers, the tiny social chaos propelled by Etheregean comedy" (Burns 1987 149). This is a too negative view of friendship pre-revolution, but the prerequisite for a stable male friendship was posited as fundamentally the same as for domestic relationships. A rake who was averse to attaching himself to one woman was portrayed as being unable to entertain a close male friendship as depicted in Rochester's poem above. Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) provides a good example. Male bonding between rakes is undermined from the beginning. When Loveless and Young Worthy run into each other, Young Worthy is affectionately greeted by the starving Loveless, although Young Worthy does not even recognise him at first (I.i.55-59). Despite an outward show of friendship, Young Worthy immediately takes Amanda's, Loveless's wife, side when he hears that Loveless believes her to be dead and pretends he has actually been to her funeral. Loveless's claim to prefer male friends to a new

mistress is clearly hyperbolic and a crude ploy to come to some money or, at least, food and accommodation. Although Loveless is incapable of constancy to anyone, including himself at this point of the play, his return to his wife, aided by his friend, does thus not undermine the possibility of close ties of friendship; on the contrary, in this play homosociality and domesticity are mutually inclusive. Only a man who is capable of having a strong relationship with his wife can also have a strong relationship with a friend.

Male bonding in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) is more complicated. Young Fashion has some sense of responsibility towards his servant's well-being, which differentiates him from a dissolute rake like Loveless or an egocentric fop like his brother, Lord Foppington. When his servant Lory sarcastically remarks that Young Fashion has nothing left to take care of, after he spends the last of his money, Young Fashion answers indignantly: "Yes sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still" (I.ii.33-38). Young Fashion's ready acknowledgment of his responsibilities towards his servant are remarkable in comparison to Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* (1696), who berates Snap for not being content to starve if Loveless has nothing to eat either. Young Fashion shows a scrap of that responsibility for those below him that was traditionally associated with the duties of a gentleman and lord. Before we even encounter his unworthy older brother, Lord Foppington, Young Fashion has brought himself into position as the more suitable model for hegemonic masculinity. The fact that his older brother, not him, has been made a peer and been given a place in the House of Lords is a bitter comment on contemporary politics. Young Fashion's only significant bond to another man remains, however, that to his servant, Lory. A relationship to a servant can never be a bond of true friendship, as there is a clear hierarchy between them (see above). *The Relapse* is thus somewhat atypical as male friendship and domestic bliss are both inferior to temporary affairs (the most significant relationship in the play appears to be between Belinda and her former lover Worthy).

In the same year, John Harris wrote *The City Bride* (1696). Friendship takes a central role here. Friendly (a former rake) is in love with Clara. Clara, however, is in love with his friend Bonvile, who has just got married to her best friend Arabella. When Friendly attempts to propose to Clara (I.i.), she walks away but then sends him a letter. She promises to accept his offer if he kills his best friend first. Just as Friendly complains in a soliloquy how true friendship is dead in these depraved times, Bonvile appears, attempting to get Friendly to rejoin the party and showering him with professions of friendship. Friendly pretends that he has an appointment for a duel but cannot find a second. Despite this being his wedding night, Bonvile immediately declares he will act as a second. Male friends are more important than a wife that he will be able to enjoy any night (I.i.). When they arrive at the spot Friendly claims the duel is going to take place, Friendly finds he cannot go through with the murder and confesses to Bonvile. Curiously enough, he is deeply hurt when Bonvile is offended and leaves, breaking

off their friendship. At the end of the play, however, they reconcile, both realising that they had been wrong. Bonvile should not have valued friendship higher than matrimony, and Friendly should not have valued it lower.[18] For the stability of the patriarchal system, a balance between them needed to be achieved. Here we have two very different conceptions of friendship: for Friendly, the prospect of getting Clara is more important than the life of his best friend. For Bonvile, nothing is more important than the bond between male friends. Friendly is not, however, as depraved as Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675). He betrays his friend for the woman, whom he intends to marry, not for the prospect of entering several affairs.

Most comedies reaffirmed the value of male friendship, which could even further a rake's reformation as in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). Wildair in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699) explicitly offers Standard friendship rather than fighting a duel with him. For the plot, a friendship between the two characters is unnecessary; however, the offer to become a genuine friend to another man is part of Wildair's reformation in the play. In Farquhar's later play, *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707), the two rakes are called Archer and Aimwell. Their names already hint at their closeness. Due to Aimwell's willingness to pursue a courtship which might not solve their mutual financial problems their friendship becomes strained but at the end of the play they are reconciled. In Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728) the only rake in the play, Count Basset, is, not part of a male group a trait he shares with Sir Francis, the country gentleman. While Cibber had struggled with aristocratic masculinity, friendship and domesticity in his earlier plays, in *The Provoked Husband* the two male protagonists are fully able to form a domestic yet hierarchical relationship with a woman and a close bond between each other (Lord Townley and Manly). The rake is not part of the equation anymore and relegated to the margin of polite society.

Bonds between men and the reputation of a man among men were the basis of a man's reputation. A man who was popular among women, however, was suspect. The rake was always portrayed as popular among his peers as well as among women, while the fop was popular among women but disdained by his fellow men, even though he tried his best to belong to a group of men. The main reason why the Reformation of Manners propagated domestic marriage was that the reformers regarded male public spaces as problematic. "The Royal Society, the College of Physicians, the universities, clubs, coffeehouses, fashionable taverns, and playhouses – a new 'cultural infrastructure' seemed to be fostering infidelity and the pursuit of pleasure" (Barker-Benfield 1992 38). In the late 17th and early 18th century aristocratic men were not likely to spend their leisure time at home. The still famous pub culture of modern-day England is but a pale shadow of the significance ale-houses and

[18] Clara does not refer to Bonvile in her letter to Friendly; she considers the abstract concept of love as a lover's best friend and means to imply that Friendly should kill his love for her.

taverns had in early modern times. The reformers of manners believed that the ale-house threatened society and argued that it opposed the interests of the family and by extension that of their domestic ideal. The ale-house separated husbands from wives and eroded class-barriers – aristocratic libertines and low-class 'mechanics' could meet there and display the same behaviour (Barker-Benfield 1992 66).

Part of the effeminacy of fops was their proximity to women and their tendency to keep the company of women (see Shapiro 1988). Hardly any fop exclusively associated with women, however (Sir John Roverhead being an exception). A hallmark of masculinity is the company and the esteem of other men, which establishes internal hegemony especially in a context of fraternal patriarchy where hierarchies were not established through family relations. Fops might be excessively heterosexual but the majority of fops is aware of the value of male association. They ape the rake-hero's (and libertine's) performance of intrigues and affairs and attempt to win approval by the retelling of their amours. Despite the fop's effeminacy and his pursuit of female company, the fop seeks validation from his male peers. His pursuit and interaction with the play's protagonists provide a foil for their masculinity and the value of the bond between other men. The majority of the fops seek the approval and company of other men. Most fops are even over-familiar; the term "familiar" is common in descriptions of fops. However, exceptions are figures such as the eponymous Sir Courtly Nice in John Crowne's 1685 comedy and Sir Roverhead in Mary Pix's *The Beau Defeated* (1700). The fop's invasion of the male public sphere was targeted by Steele and Addison in the *Tatler* as well as the *Spectator*. Brian Cowan claims that "[t]he stock type characters of the fop, the beau, the town gallant, and the excessively Frenchified 'petit maître' were seen as the bane of the polite coffeehouse society by Addison and Steele" (Cowan 2001 136).

Most of the humour in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668) is derived from the incessant pursuit the "impertinents" subject Stanford to. It is never quite clear why they should do so. In the *dramatis personae* Stanford is described as "a morose melancholy man, tormented beyond Measure with the Impertinence of People". Stanford does not appear to hold special influence at court or have friendships with possible patrons but the other men seem to feel his superior/hegemonic masculinity. Woodcock, the most effeminate of the impertinents, is described as "a familiar loving coxcomb, that embraces and kisses all men" in the *dramatis personae*. Part of that might indicate homosexuality (see below), but he is in fact only slightly more "familiar" and cloying than the poet Ninny and Sir Positive At-All. All these fops seek male bonding although all of them are at the same time too conceited to form a true bond. Although Ninny and Woodcock seem close and Woodcock is forever praising Ninny's verses and Sir Positive's songs, Ninny and Woodcock are long unaware that they are both seriously contemplating marriage with Emilia. When they find themselves in the same room at the inn, both of

them are unwilling and unable to admit why they are in the room and thus fail to find out that Emilia has duped them (V.ii.).

Sparkish in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* is an unusual fop in his marked preference for male friends and male company. He attempts to improve male bonding rather than intrigues with a woman and he is the only male character in the play who is more concerned with his friendships than his sexual conquests or the virtue of his wife (or fiancée). His main interest in Alithea is to use her wit to impress his friends, so he might simply not be sexually interested in women. Sparkish also does not realise that he is not truly part of the male group he considers himself to be in. He especially attempts to further his friendship with Harcourt, who despises him. In his first appearance on stage he disrupts the manly round of Harcourt, Dorilant and Horner. There is already something not quite right in this group, as Horner had just told his doctor that he intends to rid himself of his old acquaintances and has been forced into male company. He then attempts to use Harcourt and Dorilant as messengers to confirm his impotence. When he talks to them, however, he claims to prefer male company:

> HORNER: Well, a pox on love and wenching! Women serve
> but to keep a man from better company; though I can't
> enjoy them, I shall you the more. Good fellowship and
> friendship are lasting, rational and manly pleasures.
> HARCOURT: For all that, give me some of those pleasures you
> call effeminate too; they help to relish one another. (I.i.)

Horner ironically echoes the social precept of the time while he plots to do the exact opposite. Although they already occur in Act I, Harcourt's words might be considered to be the moral message of the play. Horner then reveals that he intends to take up drinking and enumerates the advantages of wine over love. Just before Sparkish is announced, he declares "Come, for my part I have only those glorious,/ manly pleasures of being very drunk and very slovenly." After Sparkish is announced, he declares "Well, there's another pleasure by drinking, I/ thought not of; I shall lose his acquaintance, because he/ cannot drink" (I.i.). Considering that he had just labelled drinking as "manly", his judgement of Sparkish is clear. By being impotent and taking up drinking, Horner would be rid of women and effeminate men.

Sir Fopling in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) follows Woodcock and Sparkish in his attempts to attach himself to wits. Sir Fopling's overfamiliarity is striking. Upon meeting Dorimant for the first time after his return from Paris, he embraces him and addresses him by the familiar "thou" (III.ii.140-143). Only a few lines later, he asks "Prithee, let thee and I be intimate" (III.ii.146-147). He continues to address Dorimant with "thou," thus implicating an intimacy Dorimant has never agreed too. He never addresses Sir Fopling with anything other than "you". While Dorimant, Medley and Bellair occasionally address each other with "thou", it is generally confined to a greeting, after which they use the more

polite "you". Sir Fopling's language betrays that he does not know how the mechanics of male friendships and male bonds work.

The fops were not the only characters to exhibit inability to form true bonds. Virtually all women in the Restoration comedy are ready to deceive each other in a heartbeat when it comes to men. This inability thus distinguishes fops from the truly masculine men and puts them in close proximity to women. In the Restoration comedy, the rakes are often those who can truly have meaningful friendships such as Dorimant and Medley in *The Man of Mode* (1676) and Harcourt and Dorilant in *The Country Wife* (1675), although even early comedies often show male friendships to be as frail as women's friendships, as in Otway's *Friendship in Fashion* (1678). In later, more moral comedy, the polite gentleman has meaningful friendships such as that between Lord Townley and Manly in Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728). The inability of the fop to form bonds revealed their egocentrical and superficial nature, which made them unsuitable for the responsibility of politics (or, for that matter, trade). Maiden in *Tunbridge Walks* (Baker 1703) declares that he and his similarly inclined friends (including a Beau Eithersex) "never read Gazets, nor talk of Venlo and Vigo, like you Coffee-House Fellows; but play with Fans, and mimic the Women" (III). The rather peculiar kind of male association he describes appears to be an early description of a society of mollies (if not the earliest, compare Senelick 1990 48). It is notable that he portrays homosexual molly society[19] as an alternative to the "Coffee-House" fellow who talks about politics. The dichotomy here is clear: either a man is interested in politics and masculine or he is effeminate and apes women.

Not all comedies connect "Coffee-Fouse Fellows" and their interest in politics with masculinity. In Charles Johnson's comedy *The Generous Husband: or, the Coffee-House Politician* (1711), which premiered eight years after *Tunbridge Walks*, Johnson declared that he had introduced two new kinds of fools, one of whom was a coffee-house politician called Postscript. *The Generous Husband* is one of the last comedies in which the rake could be called a rake-hero, Veramant. Veramant disclaims all interest in politics. When Postscript enters the stage in Act II, which takes place in a "chocolate-room", he greets Veramant with "What News, - What News, - *Veramant*?" Veramant replies "Sir, I know no News; – nor care to hear any". However, Postscript is undeterred and proceeds to ask him questions. When Veramant declines to give him information, he considers him to be "deep" and "He wou'd make an excellent Minister; do very well in the Cabinet" (I.i.). While that is ridiculous, his claim that Veramant, a strong male character, would make a good minister and that Philadel (Fictitia in disguise) would not make a good politician preserves the gender hierarchies and at least establishes Postscript as someone who is able to read masculinity. It is also implied, however, that Postscript himself is no politician.

[19] "Molly" denoted a member of a specific subculture of homosexual men in London, see e.g. Fletcher 1999 89.

Veramant characterises him as "from sucking the Marrow of News Pa-/ pers, and digesting 'em over his Pipe, has fill'd his Head so/ full of Smoak and Stratagem, he believes himself a *Mat-/ chiavel*." (II.i.). In the end he believes that the pedantic poet (and second fool of the play) Dyphtong is in reality a spy sent by the government and tells him that he is ready to advise the government and that the war (of the Spanish succession, presumably) could have been ended three years ago, had they just heeded him.

Postscript has only one more scene in which he demonstrates his effeminacy by humiliating himself in front of Florinda. Florinda is to receive £6000 upon marriage and is courted by three men in the play. When Postscript visits her, he treats her like a man by presuming that she is interested in foreign politics and even asking her "Ah, dear Madam – But how wou'd you reduce the ex-/ orbitant Power of the *French* King;" (III). In his senseless obsession with politics, gender boundaries are obliterated. When this strategy fails to win her he uses a very mixed bag of war metaphors, calling her a "cautious general" and counselling her on the conduct of a general. Johnson adds the stage direction "All this while Florida walks about very uneasy." His addition that if she shou'd not surrender, he would take her by storm sounds rather feeble after he describes her as a general and himself as having been killed by her eyes and never once describing himself as holding a higher position.

Virility and Sexual Power

In the comedy with its focus on marriage, the establishment of hegemonic masculinity and the devaluation of effeminacy was portrayed through and often reduced to the characters' sexual behaviour. It is impossible to discuss the masculinity of the rake and the fop without an in-depth analysis of their sexuality and sexual exploits. While other men had to affirm a man's masculinity, masculinity was also always shaped by women and femininity. On stage, this was reduced to the relationship with potential sexual partners, potential wives and wives (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 848). The relationship with wives will be discussed in chapter 7; this section will analyse in which ways rakes and fops sought to establish mastery over women, whether as lovers or as potential husbands. "Restoration drama – especially comedy – defined masculinity primarily through sexuality; masculine types are generally sexual types" (Rosenthal 2008 92). While there were various relations between men and women on stage, such as the friendship between Amanda, Loveless's wife, and his friend Young Worthy, this section will focus on the main concern of the comedies, namely erotic relationships, whether amoral or moral. Heterosexual relationships made a man a man, but a man's virility also made women women (Becker-Theye 1988 16). This section excludes misconduct such as visiting brothels and prostitutes, although such activities were a concern at the time and the main target of the Reformation of Manners, which managed to suppress streetwalkers and brothels between 1690 and the 1720s

(Dabhoiwala 2007 301-303). There was little connection to masculinity made between such adventures and masculinity in the plays, however, beyond framing it as an undesirable bonding activity between men.

Masculinity, relationships between men and women and sexuality on stage were placed in a larger cultural discourse centring on the body and its connection to masculinity. Bodies are and have always been intimately involved in the construction of masculinity (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005 851). The late 17th century saw a distinctive increase in texts surrounding male genitalia, which is an indication of the contemporary preoccupation with male sexuality. Raymond Stephanson provides an extensive list of such texts. They include gossip and satires on Charles II's phallus and the curious genre of imperfect enjoyment poems, poems about premature ejaculation (among others, by John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester and by Aphra Behn) during the Restoration period (Stephanson 2004 25-26, see also Jeon 2012). An actual incident in 1672 where a group of young rakes was caught importing a dozen dildos inspired Samuel Butler to write a burlesque poem titled "Dildoides" which describes the dildo's purpose as a "means for the Support/ of aged Letchers of the Court" (Barker-Benfield 1992 40). The political meaning of this assertion is not hard to grasp; the young libertines were attacking the virility and by extension the masculinity of the old men in charge of the state. The dildos stood for a battle over masculinity and establishing the most valued masculinity by virility. The stories stretch to *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748-49), in which Fanny Hill is concerned with the description and evaluation of the male "engine", and, of course, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767), which leaves the reader wondering about the state of the protagonist's penis (Stephanson 2004 25-26). This discourse was complicated by moral restrictions that made it impossible to mention a man's genitalia outside of medical treatises and bawdy poetry (or bawdy novels). On stage, they could certainly not be directly mentioned, although puns and double-meanings abounded. In Nathaniel Lee's *The Princess of Cleve* (1682), a notoriously immoral and unsuccessful play, Saint-André praises Neymour as "built for/ whoring […]: black, sanguine, brawny, a/ Roman nose, long foot, and a stiff – calf of a leg." (I.ii.108-110). Other plays are more obscure, but the penis/phallus always lurks in the background. That is especially true of Etherege's and Wycherley's plays, but even Cibber and Steele do not completely ignore the phallus. Cibber and Steele always make sure to portray their virtuous male characters as virile. Their means to do so were restrained by the changing tastes of the audience.

Two works discussing the connection between the phallus and wit were published in 2004: Stephanson's *The Yard of Wit: Male Creativity and Sexuality, 1650-1750* (2004) and Thomas King's ground-breaking *The Gendering of Men, 1600-1750* (the title of the first volume is *The English Phallus*). Stephanson's work differs from King's very abstract approach to the body. In King's work, as in other modern works on the performativity and social construction of gender, the concrete body part is

transformed into the phallus, a mere symbol of masculinity. Stephanson argues that poststructuralist Lacanian and feminist approaches to the phallus are ahistorical and obscure "the complex historical discourses associated with the male reproductive system in general, and the penis in particular" (Stephanson 2004 28). Stephanson acknowledges that poststructuralist conceptions of the phallus work as a metaphor for a linguistic concept or synecdoche for "the paternal metaphor", but in the discussion of male bodies its perception has to be historicised. While discourses in the 21st century have moved away from the penis (as actual body part) as a signifier for masculinity, the connection was strong in the Restoration and early 18th century. Writers were aware of the performative qualities of identity, and this sensibility was naturally more acute on the stage. However, while scholarly discourse can unearth abstract notions of the phallus in 17th- and 18th-century discourse, writers of the time had neither the vocabulary nor the self-awareness to distinguish between an abstract phallus and a material penis.

King's discussion of male fashion, particularly the codpiece and its disappearance from courtly fashion in the 1590s, illustrates the historical dimension of the phallus. King argues that "the final elimination of the codpiece did not so much veil the penis as produce the phallus, the sign of privacy vested in the natural group of masculinity and registering a man's autonomy from any incitement to display" (King 2004 174). The courtly fashion of the codpiece became suspect as unnatural, while the suspicion of "dissembling" grew (see chapter 3 on the rake). While the male groin area became more private, public interest in it increased (King 2004 175). King's notion that the disappearance of the codpiece marked the emergence of the phallus puts it in a more abstract realm than Stephanson's conception does. King's argument links back to the increasing internalisation of gender and the ways in which the displaying of one's body became feminised. He also argues that the changes in the male court fashion also highlighted a "feminization of courtly status and not the feminization or castration of male bodies" (King 2004 174). As has been discussed in the previous chapter on the fop, refinement and courtly fashion had been criticised as effeminate since the Renaissance and the trend was going towards more modest fashion for men and to consider an excess of display unmanly. The disappearance of the codpiece can be considered as one early manifestation of this. The fop was, of course, unaware of this trend. This lack of awareness of the current trend of masculinity feminised not only him but also those rakes who were as conscious of their appearance as the fop (Dorimant in *The Man of Mode* (1676), for example). Furthermore, the fop's proclivity to display himself is distinctively outdated. The connection of displaying himself and displaying one's genitalia is also expressed in the fop's excessive interest in sexual exploits.

From the beginning of the 18th century onwards playwrights and actors had to be careful with the language they used on stage. Jeremy Collier's attack and later attacks such as that by William Law (see

chapter 2) were indicative of this. In 1702, several actors had to appear in front of a jury following a performance of Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1696) (and another play, *The anatomist; or, The Sham Doctor* (1697) by Ravenscroft). Unfortunately, there is no precise record, so it is unclear whether the obscenity they were accused of was part of the play text or whether they had improvised (Hammond 2002 xiv). In a pamphlet about the proceedings, the anonymous author mentioned that the printed texts of the play had been used as evidence, but it is not clear whether the players were accused of changing the text by adding obscenity, or accused of having spoken the lines as they were written (anonymous 1702b). In Cibber's *The Provoked Husban*d (1728), the last play considered in this study, the landlady offers her lodger, Sir Francis, "a broiled bone" (IV.195). On the opening night, this broiled bone apparently amused and scandalised the spectators so much that the performance came to a standstill, and it was subsequently edited out (Dixon 1975 xv). Playwrights thus had to be increasingly careful in their language relating to sexuality and in extension masculinity.

Despite the linguistic modesty, a close reading of the comedies of the early 18th century makes it clear that masculinity was still equated with a functioning, non-diseased phallus, or, in other words, with virility (see the section on sexuality and sexual mastery). The disgust which fops could evoke is shown by this quote from Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) in the words the fop Sir Novelty Fashion's discarded mistress hurls at him:

> … Thou Wretch, thou Thing, thou Animal
> that I (to the everlasting forfeiture of my Sense and Understanding)
> have made a Man. For till thou knewest me, 'twas doubted if thou
> wer't of human Kind. … (IV.i.51-53)

She claims that Sir Novelty could only prove his masculinity (however inferior it was) by his relationship to a woman; "know" is used in the biblical sense here. This emphasis on the necessity of sexual potency to be considered a man also extended to old men. In the gender discourses of the comedy, particularly the pre-Revolution comedy, this definition of masculinity excluded old men, who were presumed to be impotent or, at the very least, not as potent as a younger man. The generational conflicts that were common in Restoration comedies (see chapter 2) were closely connected to definitions of masculinity. The fathers in the plays considered themselves to be those who wielded power and laid claim to hegemonic masculinity, but this concept of patriarchy was undermined when their sons proved their superiority to their fathers, placing their embodiment of masculinity above that of their fathers in the internal hegemony of masculinity. The fathers were often portrayed as lacking masculinity and thus unsuitable as patriarchs (see also chapters 2 and 7). Behn's play *The Lucky Chance* (1685) ends with a couplet by the cuckolded, elderly Sir Cautious: "The warrior needs must to his rival yield/ Who comes with blunted weapons to the field" (V.vii.226-227). Masculinity in the play was considered to be

something that would inevitably be lost once a man becomes impotent whether due to his age or a disease.

When Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) pretends to be impotent, the scorn heaped upon him is indicative of the role that virility played in the definition of masculinity. Dorilant reports that the ladies swear that they would not even suffer him to "do the little/ duties which other shadows of men are wont to do for 'em". "Shadows of men" are, he clarifies, "half-men", "old boys" and "superannuated stallions" (I.i.); in other words, impotent old men. Horner, as an impotent young man, is worth even less than them. He lost his masculinity with his virility. Lady Fidget is drawn to him largely because she considers his behaviour "generous" towards women and him "truly a man of honour" because he will "cause yourself to be/ reported no man? No man!", which is the "greatest shame that could fall upon a man" (II.i.589-593). A fully functional penis is here synonymous with one's identity as a man. Lady Fidget equates potency with masculinity when she asks Horner if he is "as perfectly, perfectly, the same man" as before and repeats "as perfectly, perfectly, sir?" (II.i.595-597). Plainer terms could not be spoken on the stage. In fact, Horner's penis is in full working order; Lady Fidget may imply that he is more "perfectly" a man than her ageing citizen husband, Sir Jasper. Nearly ten years later Crowne brought a similar character onto the stage, Florio in *The City Politics* (1683), who seems to be modelled after Horner as well as John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, (see chapter 3) when he employs the ruse of pretending to be dying from syphilis. He thus gains access to the Podesta's wife. However, there is less scorn heaped on Florio. We mainly see him interact with Whigs, who celebrate his supposed conversion and thus value his impotence as a means to bring him into their fold. The audience is invited to equate this pretended impotence of the pretended Whig Florio with the actual impotence of the old Whigs, the Podesta and the old lawyer Bartoline.

While virility was connected to the phallus, its expression was not always sexual. The most obvious phallic symbol (and symbol of virility) on (and off) stage was the sword. Virility and hegemonic masculinity were linked; no man who was not virile could lay claim to dominance. The connection of the phallus to the sword is certainly partly due to the sword's shape, but the connection goes deeper than that. The young rake wields the sword aggressively and competently proves his superior physical shape compared to his rivals. This physical strength, which could only be expressed on the stage through violence, was connected to sexual prowess. Moreover, the sword was also a status symbol; as a weapon, it symbolises the warrior, a class linked to the peerage and the upper gentry (see chapter 2). In his article on sexual power Weber quotes a 1671 ballad "The Haymarket Hectors", in which the author asserts that those men who (like Charles II) subordinate themselves to women make themselves "[u]nfit to wear sword or follow trumpet" (35-36, quoted by Weber 1990 195). Weber does not emphasise this, but this line is aimed at aristocratic men rather than men of all classes.

The connection of the sword to hegemonic masculinity also has class associations that posit the male aristocrat at the top of the internal hegemony of masculinity. The possession of swords was legally restricted to gentlemen and independent citizens (Hurl-Eamon 2005 72).[20] Any aristocratic man would carry a sword as part of his habitual attire, which is demonstrated in the theatre in the ease with which characters suddenly "draw" or lay their hand on their swords. For example, Pinchwife in V.iv. of Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) first puts his hand on his sword to threaten Horner, "offers to draw upon his wife" and then "offers to draw on Horner" in short succession. The fact that he only threatens with his sword, but is prevented from an actual attack may underline his status as a cuckold. There is a similar scene 34 years later in Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709). Sir George Airy has paid Sir Francis to be allowed to court Sir Francis' ward, Miranda, with the stipulation that Sir Francis will remain in the same room. Sir Francis, of course, actually intends to marry Miranda himself for her fortune, and he becomes worried when Sir George is forward in his attentions. When Sir Francis tries to intervene, Sir George first threatens him verbally and then lays his hand on his sword. When Miranda is gone, he tells him directly that any woman who marries an old man will cuckold him (II.i.252-429). The text is less explicit in its equation of potency with violence, or the functioning phallus with the sword. Both the changed taste of the audience and her gender prevented Centlivre from being as explicit as Wycherley. However, the fact that she uses the same metaphors as Wycherley demonstrates that the connection between sword, virility and masculinity remained the same. There was no reason to include such a violent side to one of the two positive male characters if not to demonstrate his virility. While aristocratic men in the 17th and 18th centuries still closely linked themselves to combat in their self-fashioning and rituals, the fashion of wearing light swords such as rapiers was first and foremost a status symbol; rapiers and other swords are not the best weapon either on the battlefield or in a street fight (see chapter 6).

In Behn's play, *The Lucky Chance* (1685), the connection between sword and masculinity is explicit. Gammer Grime, the landlady of Gayman, one of the rake protagonists, refers to his pawned silver sword as "your very badge of manhood" (II.i.92). He still owns a sword, one of sub-standard quality to which she refers as "two-handed basket hilt, this old Sir Guy of Warwick" (II.i.95). Sir Guy of Warwick, whom the landlady associates with the sword, was a hero in English and French romances, a dragon-slaying knight of low birth who marries a nobly born woman and then regrets his violent past, goes on a pilgrimage and later becomes a hermit (Oxford DNB). His association with Gayman is ironic; Gayman is nobly born but has descended into poverty and is hiding in Alsatia (Whitefriars), while planning to

[20] Hurl-Eamon (2005 72) points out that this pertained to swords and daggers and that in legal documents "sword" often referred to a knife. A sword was an expensive weapon and men of the lower classes would not have had the means to own one in the first place.

cuckold another man. Gayman does not require his sword to slay his dragon, his mistress Julia's elderly husband, but uses his skills at cards to win her from her husband. He thus transforms the medieval romance's celebration of virtue and honour into a cynical celebration of youthful virility. Once he has his inheritance as well as money won from gambling (and presumably, his silver sword back) he is willing and ready to take on his mistress. Earlier, when all he has is the "old Sir Guy of Warwick" he is impotent like an old man. The sword, named after an ancient man, symbolises the state of Gayman's private parts.

However, the sword's phallic associations should not obscure its primary and practical purpose of combat. The phallic connotations are obvious, but the reality of the actual sword symbolised more than the phallus. A proper sword was a critical part of an outward show of (aristocratic) masculinity. It is unlikely that Gammer Grime would expect her husband, a blacksmith, to display such a badge of manhood but for an aristocrat like her lodger Gayman, it was an essential part of his identity. In Behn's world, class and gender were still inextricably linked and the sword as a symbol of offensive power was vital to display one's aristocratic masculinity.

In Vanbrugh's Play *The Relapse* (1696), Young Fashion uses the reputation that virile young rakes had for violence to stop his (clandestine) wife from marrying his brother, Lord Foppington. He first forces the two witnesses to do their job as witnesses despite the disadvantage that might bring them. He then informs his father-in-law, the boorish Sir Tunbelly, that "'tis in vain to make a/ noise. If you grow mutinous, I have some friends within call, have/ swords by their sides above four foot long" (V.v.211-213). We never see those friends and it is unclear how much of his story is true (the claim regarding swords over four feet long is certainly exaggerated, but it is possible that he has more modestly armed friends outside). However, the threat works. Both his father-in-law, the country gentleman, and his brother, the fop, are powerless. Foppington has no lines in the heated exchange; only after Sir Tunbelly leaves does he remark in an aside that he will act like a great man and bear his fate patiently. This Lord Foppington has more self-awareness and a better grasp of social norms than he does in Cibber's version and than almost any other fop. He then congratulates his brother on his wife who is "canstant [sic] in her inclinations, and of a nice marality [sic]", his wittiest lines (V.v.243-252). Young Fashion's actions challenge the old order; he is a character we feel would be capable of governing, although as a penniless younger brother he has little chance to do so. However, once Young Fashion achieves the goal of financial independence, he seems to be content to let the Foppingtons and Clumsies rule. The play ends with Lord Foppington in a strong position; Lord Foppington is self-absorbed enough to bear the slight philosophically and able to tease his brother with a thinly veiled prophecy that this is not the last time he will be made a cuckold. Vanbrugh's play is bleak. A virile young

rake like Young Fashion theoretically embodies hegemonic masculinity; he has proven his superiority over every other type of man. However, he is also too self-absorbed to uphold patriarchy.

While fops like Lord Foppington can be considered a modern variant of the fool (see chapter 4), they are not as explicitly linked to the phallus as the medieval fool was (see Bakhtin 1968). The fool, by his association with trickery and luck, used grotesque phallic symbols, such as the sceptre, to subvert (and mock) hegemonic masculinities. The fop, on the other hand, is not a trickster, and he is not grotesque. He wore the same general items of clothing as the rake; both were aristocratic men. The fop, however, exaggerated this fashion (see chapter 4). Like the rake, the fop would carry a sword, as is evident in the plays by the readiness of both rake and fop to draw a sword. The famous picture of Cibber as Lord Foppington also shows the hilt of his sword (by John Simon, after Giuseppe Grisoni). Again, we do not have sufficient evidence to speculate whether there was a difference in the actual props used or if the swords of the rake and the fop looked the same. Chapter 6, on violence, will go into more detail regarding the fop and his actual use of the sword. For this chapter, it suffices to say that while rake and fop both wore swords, the fop was less skilled at controlling his temper and was occasionally a coward. His virility thus tended to be undermined rather than emphasised by his use of the sword.

The analysis of the phallus on stage is complicated by the (clothed) presence of the actor's actual penis. As an example, the opening night of Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686) caused a scandal as the actor portraying Sir Feeble opened his gown. The stage direction in the scene reads "he throws open the gown" and considering that the reaction of his young wife is to run away, it is likely that the implication was that Sir Feeble was naked underneath (his wife is not otherwise faint-hearted). In Behn's defensive preface to the play, she alludes to the incident (which is how we come to know about the scandal the scene caused). She assumed that the actor was wearing clothes underneath and thus she claims that she could not see the inappropriateness of the action. We cannot be sure what exactly the audience could see but possibly it was the mere suggestion of exposing actual male genitalia on stage which the audience considered outrageous. The episode calls attention to one problem in the analysis of drama. In the discussion of the phallus, our lack of descriptions of how exactly these plays were originally performed makes it hard to evaluate the extent the male groin area was presented on stage. We cannot know if it was emphasised in any way or if it was merely the dialogue that hinted at it.

Some actors, especially those who played "lower characters", might have included lewd gesturing in their performance. Considering that sometimes actors showed up drunk (Sullivan 1973 xv), it is at least possible, but how much of that was intended by the playwrights is an entirely different question. However, the attacks on the stage were too vague and too prudish to be explicit enough to allow

modern readers to draw a conclusion. Collier, for example, does talk about lewdness in general and cites specific examples from the texts of plays, but he does not refer to performances. As those critics shunned the theatre, it is also questionable how much they knew about the performance. In other words, the presence of the actor's body certainly impacted the way in which the audience would receive references to the phallus. However, in modern scholarly analysis, we can only acknowledge this, but cannot include it into our analysis because we do not have enough source material to include this aspect usefully in the discussion. If the actor's genitalia were consciously present to the audience on stage (albeit clothed, of course), it might have impacted a character's portrayal of masculinity significantly if his part was played by a woman. It is thus noteworthy that roles such as Young Fashion in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) were originally played by a woman. This might have been an emergency casting (the actor Hildebrand Horden, who might have originally been cast as Young Fashion had died 1696). Young Fashion is the most positive model of masculinity in the play but considering that the character was played by a woman, his very masculinity was also put into question during the performance, which emphasises the play's dire judgment of contemporary masculinity.

As argued in the previous section, virility and hegemonic masculinity were closely connected. The comedies posited that only a virile man could be truly masculine and that hegemonic masculinity was demonstrated in the expression of virile, youthful masculinity. Virility alone was not enough, however; a man had to dominate his sexual partner at all times. This sexual mastery had a status similar to that of physical mastery because they both reaffirmed a man's masculinity. The rake demonstrated his virility by using his wit for seductive purposes. While this was not a new form of expressing masculine dominance (or hegemonic masculinity), Trumbach remarks that "there is evidence that in earlier periods male authority was not so heavily based on the overt expression of sexuality and instead tended to find support in sexual self-control, within the newer paradigm it was no slander to say that a man was debauched or a whore-monger" (Trumbach 1988 118). What Trumbach considers an expression of "male authority" can be translated into hegemonic masculinity; the overt expression of sexuality he discusses is more accurately described as sexual mastery. The (hetero-)sexual act itself was seen in a frame of conquest, one in which the man had the role of the conqueror and the woman that of the conquered (see e.g. Chernaik 1995 5). While Chernaik considers Sade's "nightmarish vision" (Chernaik 1995 5) to be the climax of this notion, the most notorious but less extreme expression in the theatre was the cuckolding comedies (see below) such as Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), in which the sexual act stands as a symbol of mastery. The seducer takes over mastery from the cuckolded husband and thus establishes a hierarchy between men in which the sexually successful lover comes out on top.

The connection of overt and uncontrolled sexuality to hegemonic masculinity was framed as problematic from the beginning. The poetry of John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, for example, regularly chides the speaker's unruly "tarse". In his poem "The Imperfect Enjoyment", Rochester calls the speaker's penis a "common fucking-post" that would serve as relief for every "whore" in town but refuses to follow his command and perform when he commands it. Based on a wide reading of such texts dealing with the phallus/penis, Stephanson concludes that "the yard was sometimes viewed as an irrational and ungovernable Other, at odds with male will, and commodified as a thing to be owned or exchanged by others without reference to the male self or character to which it was attached" (Stephanson 2004 30). The conception of the phallus (and in extension, lust) as something that was at odds with the male will could thus explain the paradox of men simultaneously being in charge of the country, the church and the family, and being driven by sexual desire.

The new paradigm of unbridled sexuality as an expression of hegemonic masculinity could not remain unchallenged for long; self-control became an important part of masculine power again and, indeed, in arguably all comedies the idea of self-control remains important. To assert his dominance, a man needed to not only govern women and men inferior to himself, but also his own irrational body part, which, nevertheless, at the same time made him a man. The irrationality and ungovernability of the rake were expressions of his potent virility; to curb his sexual activity would be akin to castrating him, yet for a civil society it was necessary that he curbed it. This was one of the fundamental paradoxes that the Reformation of Manners sought to negotiate. This connection between self-control and hegemony had a strong political component in the early Restoration. The enemies of the Charles II and James II attacked their sexual behaviour and their presumed slavish devotion to their mistresses (see e.g. Weber 1990 196).

The playwright Etherege was close to the court and, perhaps to counter such accusations, his most famous rake, Dorimant in *The Man of Mode* (1676), was shown to be in control of himself as well as of others at nearly all times. He could not give into his impulses, or his intrigues would fail. While the phallus may have become the locus of masculinity, the ability to control it was part of the rake's power or the reason for his failure to maintain power and thus his hegemony over those he should rule. In Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) the aristocratic rake Loveless is as unable to control his passion as his servant, Snap. Snap not only shows disrespect towards his master throughout the play, but his judgement is also often superior to that of his master, undermining the hierarchy between them. He eventually rapes a fellow servant; it is implied that his misconduct stems from his association with his rakish master. When Loveless is reformed, he forces his servant to marry his victim, thus establishing that once he can control himself, he can control those below him. The connection between the ability to govern sexual impulses and take control of the household again connects sexuality and hegemonic

masculinity. The phallus as a symbol of uncontrolled and undesirable male sexual activity was that part of the man that the Reformation of Manners sought to govern. While early rakes such as Dorimant (Etherege, *The Man of Mode*, 1676) and Horner (Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, 1675) have some control over their penises (as long as they serve their needs), rakes such as Loveless (in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*, 1696, as well as in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse*, 1696) are subject to their penis's unruliness.

The virility of the comedy's male protagonists was often established in the very first scene of the play. In Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671), for example, the two rake-heroes Rhodophil and Palamede meet for the first time after they have lived in different countries for some years. Palamede complains that he has come to marry at his father's command and Rhodophil answers that he grieves for the "girls and courtesans" who have "lost the most kind-hearted, doting, prodigal/ humble servant in Europe" (I.i.132-133). Palamede counters by claiming that "all I could do in these years I stayed behind/ you was to comfort the poor creatures for the loss/ of you" (I.i.134-136). Bragging is not necessary among those two close friends; they reaffirm their heterosexual virility to each other. Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) is established as renowned rake in the first scene, and in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) Loveless, the destitute rake, is confirmed as virile in the first scene, as is Young Worthy. In the comedy, a man had to be established as virile before the plot could fully take off.

Comedies in which the protagonists were shown to be in full control over their sexual desires/phallus followed this trend. In Steele's comedy *The Tender Husband* (1705) it is the wife who needs to reform, but we first meet the husband's former lover, who is still devoted to him. While he is ready to embark on the course of a faithful husband, Steele first shows us that he has a very satisfied former lover. In his later comedy, *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), he does not compromise his male protagonist thus. Steele presents Bevil Junior as a young man of exemplary virtue, but even those who know him well (his father, his friend and his servant) suspect his intentions. While this is, on the one hand, a ploy to arouse the audience's sympathy for the misunderstood character, it also presents him as a man who would be as capable of sexual exploits as a rake. He chooses to follow the demands of virtue and morals rather than those of his body, which makes him an exemplary character. Similarly, in Cibber's last comedy *The Provoked Husband* (1728), Lord Townley's friend and suitor of his sister is called "Manly"; the name points out that even though this character disdains all the usual pursuits of a rake and for the entirety of the play devotes his attention to one woman, he is masculine. If his name was not enough, he also confesses that there was a time when he was often in the company of women and "being often in the toyshop/ there was no forbearing the baubles" (III.120-121). Even though all those men were virtuous, their masculinity had to be affirmed by the playwrights by emphasising that they consciously chose to be chaste (or even by hinting at a past in which they were not).

Seduction always had inherently mythical qualities invoking the story of the Fall. Nancy Rosenfeld, who dedicates a study to *The Human Satan in Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (2008), posits "the existence of an archetypal human Satan character" (Rosenfeld 2008 1), which was introduced by Milton in *Paradise Lost* (1667) and John Bunyan in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666). The concept of an archetype of a more human Satan figure is useful to explain some of the attitudes of the rake as well as those towards him. Rosenfeld herself discusses Dorimant in *The Man of Mode*, but the concept can be applied to others too. Satan, especially in *Paradise Lost*, does not so much lie as seduce, a hallmark of rakish masculinity. Seduction in itself was satanic. Betty Becker-Theye considers seduction itself to be something almost mythical. "The seducer originates in the Biblical explanation of how man came to be separated from God, how man's truth came to be separated from God's truth. In Latin 'seducere' means to 'separate', and the seducer is the 'separator'" (Becker-Theye 1988 3). The act of seduction likens the rake to Satan (see above) and especially Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost. Paradise Lost* was first published in 1667 and might have partly influenced the conception of the rake.

In this conception the rake is elevated above common men and his dominant masculinity rooted in dark mystic realms. It is obvious that this connection did not denote his model of masculinity as desirable normative masculinity. To have the rake as the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity was a threat to the nation. He was not associated with Adam, who succumbed to Eve's seduction, but with Satan, who seduced Eve. The true power of seduction was thus relocated in the masculine sphere. Rosenfeld's comparison of Etherege's Dorimant to Satan is explicitly a comparison between Dorimant and Milton's Satan. While she brings Rochester into the discussion, she also points out the crucial difference between this historical figure and the fictional Satan and Dorimant: while Rochester was plagued by uncertainty and confessed that it was anger that drove him to write cutting satires, Dorimant appears to be much colder and certainly not subject to bouts of uncertainty (Rosenfeld 2008 155). Rosenfeld concludes that "just as Sin's lending of the key could not enable Satan to escape permanently from the hell within, Harriet's success in taming Dorimant, in helping him escape to a paradise happier far, will be short-lived, and the hero will not be permanently redeemed by the love of a woman" (Rosenfeld 2008 167). Satan, of course, can never be forgiven and God himself declares him unable to reform himself in *Paradise Lost*.

Seduction was also connected to movement; as Florence March points out, the motif of "wandering" and "rambling" was strong both in the titles of comedies and in the names of rakes (March 2008 191). Stories of seduction would obsess British readers until the end of the 18th century (Bowers 2009 140). While Restoration comedies were primarily interested in seduction, which moved all their plots (March 2008 190), 18th-century comedies ceased to be so interested in tales of seduction. The successful protagonists on the Restoration stage were master seducers, using their wit to achieve their

goals. Stephanson's work on the connection of male creativity and sexuality explains the way in which seduction, or sexual mastery by wit rather than force, tied in with modern notions of masculinity. Stephanson is interested in the connection that male writers made to their genitalia and the ways in which their self-fashioning was linked to their genitalia. His work can be translated into the connection between intrigue and genitalia/virility on stage. To successfully conduct an intrigue, a character had to exert a creative force. Although sexual mastery was considered to be essential to the libertine/rakish conception of masculinity, few comedies show the rake to be truly masterful. Instead, the rake's ambitions are shown to be too high; the greediness of his desires threatens to destabilise class and gender hierarchies. Male anxiety is most apparent in the attempt or failure to establish sexual mastery over women. In a world where the act of courting was equated to "laying siege" (see *The Committee* (1662) above), a connotation with war which made it part of the masculine sphere, women who were actively trying to seduce men were not only in danger of being too masculine, they also threatened the masculinity of the men they attempted to seduce.

In Restoration plays, which were often close to the court's ideology (see chapter 2), the rake is the "author" of the intrigues on stage and thus not only the author of his own story of seduction and courtship but also that of other characters. As already argued above, the fertility of his mind is directly connected to the fertility of his groin. This fertility, in turn, is connected to his masculinity and his dominance. In the comedy a man never marries a woman with a wit superior to his own; the starkest example of this is perhaps Southerne's late Restoration comedy *Sir Anthony Love* from 1690. Sir Anthony is, in fact, Lucy, who is in love with Valentine, and cross-dresses to follow him into France. However, as Sir Anthony she also orchestrates her revenge on her former keeper, Sir Gentle, and on Valentine's love-interest Floriante. When she (Lucy/Sir Anthony) reveals her identity to Valentine, she clearly intends to become his mistress, not his wife. In comparison to her, Valentine lacks wit and agency and is therefore emasculated in his relationship with her but still more active and witty than Floriante, who is therefore better suited as his wife. Valentine recovers his masculinity somewhat at the end when he negotiates Lucy's annual maintenance after she has duped Sir Gentle into marrying her.

In some of the earliest Restoration comedies too, the male protagonists are not necessarily wittier and more resourceful than the women are. One example of this kind is Howard's *The Committee* (1662). The comedy is remarkable for the manner in which the relationship between the male and female protagonists differs from that in later comedies. Part of the rhetoric is already in place when Colonel Careless teases Colonel Blunt for not having paid court to Arbella in the coach and having rescued her from the Puritan family she had to live with. Blunt replies "I'll woo no woman." Careless then admonishes him "Wouldst thou have them court thee? A soldier, and/ not love a siege!" (I.i.195-

197). Careless links valour not only to the battlefield but also to the wooing of women in a way that implies the self-evidence of the notion. However, in this play the two men do not successfully woo women. The two female protagonists, Ruth and Arbella, decide that they want Careless and Blunt as soon as they see them, and it is Ruth who then arranges everything. Careless at first attempts to seduce Ruth, but because he believes her to be the Puritan Committee Man Day's daughter, his intentions are to have her as a mistress, not as a wife. She successfully refuses him until they can be married. Careless and Ruth are predecessors of the famous gay couple in later Restoration comedies, but it is Ruth who is the author of the intrigues. In *The Committee,* this lack of skill in intrigues does not emasculate Careless and Blunt, however. Their straightforwardness contrasts favourably with the underhandedness of the Puritans. The girls intrigue for the right reason but the ability to intrigue is located in women and Puritan Republicans. The royalist Cavaliers affirm their aristocratic masculinity in a radically different way than later characters on stage; they are placed far away from intrigue. Even in Etherege's first play, *The Comical Revenge* (1664), there is markedly less intrigue than in his later *The Man of Mode* (1676).

Dorimant's behaviour in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) differs from that of the Cavaliers in *The Committee* (1662) and Etherege's own earlier *The Comical Revenge* (1664). Dorimant and by extension *The Man of Mode* are often cited by critics as the exemplum of male sexual power (fantasies) (e.g. Weber 1986, Chernaik 1995, Webster 2005 and Mackie 2009). Dorimant's power is most plainly manifested in his dealings with his cast-off mistress Loveit. "By his [Dorimant's] display of mastery over Loveit, a scene put on partly for Bellinda's benefit, he is advertising to Bellinda a sexual potency she can taste for herself later in private. It is Dorimant's unscrupulousness that equips him for success in a world where, as Hobbes put it, force and fraud are the cardinal virtues" (Chernaik 1995 12). By means of this unscrupulousness and his sexual power, he breaks up the friendship between the two women and seems to enjoy his mastery thoroughly. Perhaps paradoxically Dorimant affirms the heteronormative gender paradigm most evidently in his dealings with his mistresses and not in his dealings with the woman he intends to make his wife.

Weber places Dorimant's erotic power in the context of the political debate concerning Charles II's masculinity and the potential threats to the nation by his mistresses. He claims that "Dorimant attempts to overcome the spectres of female power [...] by defining the male body as the site of primary erotic potential in order to realize a masculine fantasy of self-contained power" (Weber 1990 208). In other words, Weber claims that by portraying a rake overcoming the spectres of female power by managing his mistresses, Etherege is attempting to establish libertinism, as embodied by the king, as hegemonic masculinity. Charles II's excessive pursuit of sexual pleasure was often considered to emasculate the king, and *The Man of Mode* was part of a discourse to counter this allegation. Weber

also acknowledges that the play does not fully support this notion. "[However,] female eroticism still threatens the male sexual economy that is designed to obscure and erase it. Male anxiety can never be entirely satisfied or resolved, the victories men win over women never complete enough to achieve the sexual omnipotence they desire" (Weber 1990 208). Dorimant's power is undercut in several ways. Harriet, the female protagonist, is not only a highly desirable heiress; she also possesses a wit only rivalled by Dorimant's own. Dorimant is afraid of his love for her. "I love her, and dare not let her know it. I fear she/ has an ascendant o'er me and may revenge the wrongs I have done/ her sex." (IV.i.138-139) His power over women is based on his emotional distance to them; he can attract and discard mistresses without becoming involved. To gain Harriet, he has to concede part of his power. He has to marry her and to do so he will have to leave the town, the sphere of his power, and visit her in the country, where she lives with two old women, her mother and her aunt. However, Harriet also removes herself to the country; the threat of the witty heroine's defeat of the sexual dominance of her male counterpart in this same urban space is also banished.

The play's ending is ambiguous; we are not sure if Dorimant has won over Harriet or Harriet has won over Dorimant. What is obvious is that Dorimant and Harriet are better matched than Bellair and Harriet, the match their parents intended. Harriet's wit is far superior to Bellair's, and thus, the power in the relationship might have shifted to the wife, Harriet, endangering the subordination of women. The rake Dorimant thus manages to contain the threat of female sexual power in a way that Careless and Blunt in Howard's *The Committee* (1662) cannot. Dorimant also exhibits his anxiety and thus reveals the fragility of sexual intrigues as the basis for his power. When his cast-off mistress, whom he had intended to taunt with Sir Fopling, displays interest in the fop, he asks Medley impulsively "She cannot fall from loving me to that?" (III.iii.281). He then admits to himself that he is "concerned" but he "dare not show it" because that might ruin the progress he has made with Bellinda, his new mistress (III.iii.290-91). Even Dorimant's dominance is assailable; the rake's masculinity is under constant threat, always needs proof and the basis for Dorimant's dominance is shown to be fragile. Even though he still holds on to it at the end of the play, the implication is that the rake's grip on power is unstable and that by extension his rule is under constant threat (as Charles II's was).

Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) is a more successful version of Dorimant. His power is only possible through his detachment from all social ties; he does not fall in love with a woman, and he attempts to cut himself off from his male friends. Egomania allows Horner to exert control; it threatens rather than supports patriarchal stability. Horner's disregard for everything apart from his sexual gratification undercuts the relations between men which are essential to uphold the general domination of men over women. Horner can only operate as a parasite on a flawed patriarchal society. His former friend Harcourt serves as a foil to him and an example of what hegemonic masculinity should

be. Harcourt intends to marry Alithea, Pinchwife's sister, who is betrothed to the fop Sparkish. She initially refuses to listen to Harcourt's wooing, insisting that it would be contrary to her honour and her virtue to break her promise to Sparkish. Nevertheless, in Act IV Harcourt disguises himself as a parson to prevent the marriage between Sparkish and Alithea and marries her himself. He thus establishes his dominance not only over the effeminate and ridiculous fop Sparkish but also over the witty and virtuous Alithea, who is finally swayed by him. Harcourt's demonstration of his power does not end there, however. When Alithea is accused of having been seduced by Horner, she is concerned how that will affect Harcourt's honour. Harcourt assures her that she can leave the matter in his hands; he is secure enough in his virility not to be as jealous as Pinchwife, and he will make sure that the world will believe her innocent (V.iv.279-282). He demonstrates that he is capable of protecting the honour of his family and that he is superior to the other three male protagonists: Horner, Sparkish and Pinchwife. Harcourt can write his own destiny.

Loveless in Cibber's *Love's Last* Shift (1696) fails as an author of his own plot. He arrives in England after seven years' absence, destitute and in desperate need of help. His only plan is to beg Sir William Wisewoud, to whom he has mortgaged his estate, for more money or to find a friend to redeem the mortgage "and share the overplus", which he then plans to spend on pleasure again (I.i.94-105). Loveless is too absorbed in the pursuit of the instant gratification of his desires to be able to devise a solid plan to improve his situation. However, Cibber cannot yet imagine a play in which there is no libertine to hold the strings together. Where Loveless fails as master of his destiny and his sexual conquests are at the very least doubtful, his friend Young Worthy orchestrates his own marriage to the capricious heiress Narcissa and his brother's marriage to Bellinda, and plots to reform Loveless and reconcile him with his exemplary wife, Amanda. Young Worthy, a younger brother and professed rake, shows himself capable of managing not only his own affairs but also those of others. Considering that he can take care of his equals, it is hard to imagine that he would neglect his servant as Loveless does. Narcissa is the most difficult woman in the play, and yet the audience is left in no doubt that Young Worthy will be able to manage his wife. Young Worthy embodies all the qualities of hegemonic masculinity, but as a younger brother he has to struggle harder for power than those less capable of ruling (like Sir Foppington or even his older brother).

In Vanbrugh's answer to Cibber's play, *The Relapse*, there is no character like Young Worthy, who would be willing and able to manage other people's affairs. However, Young Fashion, the young Jacobite rake of the play, proves his mastery over his older brother, Lord Foppington, as has been discussed in the previous section. In Cibber's later play, *The Careless Husband* (1704), Lady Easy's exemplary obedience is noted by her husband, but he takes obedience by women as his due. In a quarrel with his mistress Lady Graveairs, he declares that he expects even his mistresses to obey him

(III.i.151-157). Sir Charles insinuates that a mistress should be even more obedient than a wife as she has less dignity. He wants to prove himself as the master not only of his wife but also of his mistress without realising that his own moral inadequacy makes him inferior. He attempts to establish his virility at the expense of his morals. Throughout the play, Cibber insinuates that this need for dominance is rooted in Sir Charles's uncertainty regarding his principles. Once he is reformed, he will not need to dominate mistresses to feel manly. The mastery over his own desire is portrayed as more masculine and more powerful than the mastery over women.

Another example in which a female protagonist appears as a seducer is Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686). Gayman worries about his reputation after Julia (whose identity he does not know in this scene) stages an elaborate pastoral song and dance. Once the dancers disappear and he is alone on stage, he muses:

> Sure I have not lived so bad
> a life to gain the dull reputation of so modest a
> coxcomb but that a female might down me
> without all this ceremony. Is it care of her honour?
> That cannot be; this age affords none so nice.
> (III.v.67-71)

While he does not question the femininity of a woman forward enough to have him brought into her house (for payment), in some sense his masculinity seems to be injured by the idea that he might be thought "modest". The fact that a woman finds it necessary to make a ceremony of seducing him, rather than being seduced by him, puts him in an inferior position. However, Gayman only hesitates for a short moment before prostituting himself. While he still believes that a woman who gives him money and brings him to her house must be old and ugly, he concludes his soliloquy with "Well, be she young or old, woman or devil,/ She pays, and I'll endeavour to be civil" (III.v.79-80). Young Clerimont in Pix's comedy *The Beau Defeated* (1700) acts very differently in similar circumstances. He is an early type of the polite gentleman and when Lady Landworth offers him money (anonymously) he scorns it and sends it back (II.i.137). His landlady berates him in the same scene for not putting his handsomeness to better use, or, in other words, she expects him to prostitute himself and thus be able to pay her more. Young Clerimont is set as a masculine foil to those men like Gayman who do so.

The rake's domineering stage presence is connected to his sexual power even in affairs where he does not profit sexually himself. This assistance is not charitable but self-serving; by helping another man win a woman, a man could prove his own superior virility and wit. Examples include Horner's helping Dorilant in *The Country Wife* (1675), Dorimant's helping Bellair in *The Man of Mode* (1676), Gayman's helping Belmour in *The Lucky Chance (1686)*, Young Worthy's orchestration not only of Amanda's reconciliation with Loveless, but also of his brother's reconciliation with Bellinda in *Love's*

Last Shift (1696), and Wildair's support for Standard in *The Constant Couple* (1699). In Steele's sentimental comedy *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) the polite Gentleman Bevil Junior helps his friend Myrtle to succeed with Lucinda. As the last example makes plain, even Steele, who sought to reform masculinity, located masculine superiority in the ability to write plots which were connected to hegemonic masculinity. In contrast, the fop's ridiculousness is often established by his failure to demonstrate sexual power, despite his best efforts.

Sexual Warfare and Cuckolding

The woman (and, in Restoration comedy, her fortune) was an object the rake had to strive for, and to strive was to fight. The weapon of choice was wit rather than sword. The enemy could either be the (coy) woman or her father/guardian (or, less frequently, the woman's elderly husband). In comedies, these older and often rich men stand for the dragon the hero has to defeat to win the lady. This is the case in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) (a husband), Behn's *The Rover* (1677) (a brother) and *The Lucky Chance* (1686) (elderly husbands), Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688) (a guardian), Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) (a father and guardian), Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) (a father) and Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709) (a father and guardian), to name just a few. Occasionally the enemy is an elderly woman as in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) or Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700). The rakes (and other men) were figuratively cast as dragon-slaying heroes. While this parallel was often self-consciously ironic, it also places the rake in a chivalric tradition.

The contradictions in the conceptualisation of rakes as heroes is evident in Behn's *The Rover* (1677). While Willmore is mainly interested in sexual conquest, part of his self-definition is dependent on his prowess. After a woman only briefly flirts with him shortly after his first appearance on stage, he threatens to follow her, to which Belvile replies "By all means use no violence here" (I.ii.114). Willmore does not reply directly to that but shortly afterwards he says:

> Willmore: Death! But will they not be kind? quickly be kind?
> Thou know'st I'm no tame fighter, but a rampant
> lion of the forest. (I.ii.120-122)

Willmore links his desire for sexual conquest (or his sexual prowess) with his prowess in battle. Whether the lion is on a rampage of destruction or sexual conquest does not appear to matter. In this comedy, the battle of the sexes is explicitly linked to actual battle, of which all protagonists have experience. In Durfey's *A Fond Husband* (1677) the rake himself, Rashley, likens his cuckolding success to battle. Emilia shares her apprehensions about the discovery of their affair with her lover Rashley by Ranger, his rival. Rashley responds:

> RASHLEY: Dangerous? Not at all, madam. Never think him so. Success,
> which animates the hero and leads him on to greater enterprises

> than before he durst attempt, has cherished hopes in me."
> (I.i.65-67)

Rashley's comparison of himself, the lover of a married woman, to a hero is to some extent ironic. It is, however, also serious. Rashley, the young libertine, proves his superiority over the older, Whiggish Bubble on the sexual field rather than on a battlefield. Sexuality and battle were intricately linked and young men dominated on both. Men like Bubble were relegated to the lower rungs of masculinity.

Not all plays are that obvious in their interlinking of these two facets of masculinity. Both Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) and Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), to name two roughly contemporary comedies, do not link their identity with prowess in actual battle, but their tactics on stage present them as the masters of their environment without the dangers of physical violence. They are generals on the field of sexual conquest. Horner's skill in intrigues and planning is contrasted with the crude methods of Pinchwife, who locks up his wife and threatens violence against any man who comes close to her. When Pinchwife brings his wife to Horner in V.ii believing her to be his sister Alithea, Horner has proven that he can make a simple country wife capable of deceiving her husband and succumbing to him. Dorimant is likewise brilliant, managing not only his own affairs but also those of Young Bellair. Their tactics are so refined that they do not need to resort to physical violence, but the connection to battle strategies is still present.

The most obvious act of sexual aggression is, of course, rape. Rape was long seen as a property crime, for example in the Bible. In 18th-century London the courts sought to curb male sexual aggression and delineate appropriate expressions of masculine sexuality (Hurl-Eamon 2005 32). It is noteworthy that the terms "courtship", "seduction" and "rape" were distinguished but their connection problematic. The terms were generally used as we would use them today: courtship denoting a process of mutual consent, seduction denoting "the gradual achievement of female collusion with primary male desire" (Bowers 2009 141) and rape denoting an act of force and non-consent. Up to and into the 17th century, rape denoted abduction and elopement, regardless of whether the woman went willingly or not. It was "a property crime between men" (Bowers 2009 141) and the consent of the woman alone was not always considered enough. In comedies the rakes and fops love the game of seduction, which often borders on rape rather than courtship. On stage, rape scenes were popular in tragedies; Jean I. Marsden argues that such scenes strongly appealed to the pathos of audiences at the time. They created an erotic spectacle while the suffering moved the passions (Marsden 2000 186). Rape scenes were far less common in the comedy, and if there was a rape scene, it was mostly portrayed in a purely comic light, such as when Loveless' servant Snap (portrayed by the celebrated comedian Penkethman) rapes Amanda's woman in IV.iv (he is forced to marry her in the conclusion, as mentioned above). Other comedies such as Crowne's *City Politiques*

(1683) and Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) parody the rape scenes of tragedies by portraying women who pretend to resist and cry for help while remarking in their asides how much they want to be overpowered. In later comedies, such as those of Johnson and Bullock, rape is hinted at in relation to the rake characters, who in those plays were commonly villains. As a means of sexual warfare, however, they belonged to the tragedy, not the comedy.

One exception is Behn's *The Rover* (1677). It has been discussed elsewhere that Willmore is an attractive, but highly problematic, rake and the play is critical of masculine displays of power over women, sexual or otherwise. Willmore attempts to rape women several times during the play. Unlike Dorimant (Etherege, *The Man of Mode*, 1676), for example, who relies solely on the attraction of his person and wit, Willmore is moved to use crude violence to achieve his sexual goals. Anne Marie Stewart and Anita Pacheco both argue that Willmore's attempts at rape are a way of exerting or reclaiming the masculinity and power that he lost in the Civil War (Stewart 1997 29-30; Pacheco 1998 330). Willmore attempts to justify his behaviour by his right to revenge and retaliation as well as by portraying himself as a victim of sexual desire (III.iii.), even attempting some quasi-philosophical justification in the Hobbesian/Rochesterian vein (III.iii.44-55). When the ridiculous country gentleman Blunt later initiates an attempted gang-rape as revenge for property theft (IV.v.), Willmore's justifications are exposed as operating on the same level as those of the ridiculous Blunt. Even worse, Don Pedro does not realise that the woman he attempts to rape in this scene is his own sister in disguise. Despite the fact that these scenes clearly depict rape as a disgusting act, Willmore can retain his superiority throughout the play, and his flawed libertinism is presented as the hegemonic model of masculinity within the play, superior to that of the Spanish gentleman or Blunt, despite the fact that English aristocrats had lost control over England. Sarah Olivier argues that Willmore's shameless flaunting of precisely the cavalier behaviour promoted by the Puritans as a "badge of perverse honor" attracted audiences to him due to his display of brazen arrogance (Olivier 2012 72). This multi-layered presentation of hegemonic masculinity, which did not need sexual aggression to sustain itself but which was also not undermined by attempted rape, remained unique (to my knowledge).

Instead of rape, comedies commonly used cuckolding as a trope of sexual aggression and spectacle. The late 17th century was the apogee of cultural interest in cuckoldry (Turner 2002 84). The term cuckolding was conceptually different from adultery; "it deflected the sinfulness of marital infidelity by mocking the follies or inadequacies of the adulteress's husband" (Turner 2002 83). Lionel in Burnaby's comedy *The Modish Husband* (1702) exclaims that "I'd no more cuckold a Fellow/ that wou'd not be Jealous of me, then I'd fight with a /Man that wou'd not defend himself" (I.i.). Cuckolding was seen as a means to establish dominance, but for it to be effective, the opponent needed to be willing to fight. Horns did not only dehumanise the cuckold, they were also a phallic symbol which linked to the

husband's lack of sexual potency. However, the connection was lost in the public consciousness at the time, and other explanations for the symbol were sought (Turner 2002 87). Turner mentions a curious legend in popular culture according to which it was linked to a promontory near Deptford (today a district of London) called "Cuckold's Haven", where in King John's time (the 12th-13th centuries) cuckolds were said to have gathered each year with their wives and their lovers. In 1661 a large flagpole to which all kinds of horns were fixed marked the location (Turner 2002 83). The flagpole was the most tangible physical evidence for the period's obsession with cuckoldry; cuckolding jokes were popular on all social levels (Turner 2002 84).

In Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1697) Constant asks his friend Heartwell "But have not/ you a good opinion enough of your own parts to believe you could/ keep a wife to yourself?" (V.iv.31-33). Constant and Heartwell put the blame firmly on the husband. Constant's sentiment that "women are not naturally lewd" (V.iv.38) is, at first glance, kind towards women, who were socially stigmatised if they were not chaste, and who were, according to Lady Brute, generally considered to be naturally lewd (V.ii.147-153). However, it also implies that men are in a naturally superior position; women merely follow their lead, and if a man has good enough "parts" and is constant himself, his wife will not stray. Mary Astell, "the first English feminist" according to her editor Bridget Hill, disliked this notion because it diminished a woman's responsibility for her fate (Astell 1986 91); Astell understood that while it seemed to give wives an excuse to enjoy themselves, it also placed men in a superior position. "Parts" is, of course, a pun on the penis; if a man is virile, he will keep his wife. This dialogue reveals the contradictory anxiety about cuckolding: every man was anxious that he was not virile enough, because a virile man would assure his wife's faithfulness.

On the other hand, every wife was suspected of cuckolding her husband. We might compare this sentiment to the subtitle of one of Southerne's plays: *The Wives Excuse; or Cuckolds make themselves* (1690). In this case, the husband is negligent towards his wife and not necessarily impotent; but the title emphasises again that a wife's adultery was seen not only as a sin or vice on her part but also as a sign of her husband's inadequacy. But Southerne's (failed) play also shows the risk for a wife: Mrs. Friendall does not betray her husband, but her character is at the mercy of the town and she is mocked at the end of the play for meeting the fate of a woman married to a fool, of being considered unchaste (Cordner 1990 277). Crowne's comedy *The Married Beau* (1694) was already briefly discussed in chapter 4. *The Married Beau* was thematically indebted to Southerne's *The Wives Excuse* (1690) and mocked the hysteria around cuckolding which Friendall falls for. Deeply distrustful of women's fidelity, he asks his friend Polidore to test his wife. When he insults Polidore's virility, Polidore is motivated enough seduce Mrs. Friendall. The cuckold has thus made himself by testing his wife's virtue in the first place.

In virtually all comedies cuckolding is alluded to as the punishment for any man who marries. The anxiety relating to cuckolding is palpable in every play; even if no one is actually cuckolded in a play, there are always references to it. The danger of being cuckolded was one of the main arguments against marriage that rakes and fops made (see chapter 7). Medley, for example, mocks Young Bellair in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) by claiming that:

> Were I so near marriage, I should cry
> out by fits as I ride in my coach, 'Cuckold! Cuckold!', with no less
> fury than the mad fanatic does 'Glory' in Bethlem. (I.i.309-311)

Medley implies that the very prospect of marriage is enough to drive a man insane; although Medley also seems to mock the very paranoia itself as fanatical. Becoming a cuckold was the greatest danger to a husband not only for genealogical reasons but also due to the damage to his reputation. Turner links this obsession with the common metaphor of the wife and the husband becoming "parts of one body and one flesh" and the fact that marriage was the bachelor's gateway to patriarchal society, "central to the very process of becoming a man" (Turner 2002 85). Conversely, however, a man was dependent on the conduct of his wife to maintain his public image as a masculine man. The idea of cuckolding also revealed the uneasy foundation of a man's sense of his own masculine power; his honour was dependent on the conduct of a woman, his wife. If she committed adultery, he was publicly revealed to be unable to control her and thus to have failed in the role as ruler of his household. Both male honour and a man's identity as a man were connected to female chastity. "In the body paradigm a wife's adultery corrupted the flesh, while the husband, as the head, was held in contempt for being unable to prevent it" (Turner 2002 87). It is not surprising that cuckolding was not only popular in comedies, but frequently used as a weapon. By using their wit (rather than their sword) rakes could attack other men, mainly citizens, without breaking the law or the peace.

Chernaik links the dynamics of cuckolding to Hobbes' philosophy, by using the famous China scene in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) as an example: "with its string of double entendres, [the scene] anatomises a society in which sex is a quantifiable commodity both for women and men, and in which, as in the model of human behaviour proposed by Hobbes, all members of society are locked in an unceasing struggle for dominance, masked by the polite formulas of decorum" (Chernaik 1995 5). (It is more likely that Wycherley and Hobbes had shared premises than Wycherley was a faithful disciple of Hobbes.) Chernaik's observation that "for rakes and cuckolds alike in this play [*The Country Wife*] the sexual act is a symbolic enactment of mastery, most satisfying (and conversely most galling) when performed before witnesses, with the cuckold an unwilling, passive voyeur or auditor of his own humiliation" (Chernaik 1995 5) expresses the considerable implications of cuckolding. Durfey's *The Fond Husband* (1677) gives an even better example of the husband as the passive voyeur of his own

humiliation: Bubble, the elderly husband of Emilia, has invited Rashley, her lover, to live in his house. Rashley entertains him with the stories of his affair – which Bubble believes Rashley carries on with one of his neighbour's wives. We are not invited to feel sympathy for Bubble; he clearly enjoys hearing the stories and makes fun of the duped husbands as "animals" and mistakenly considers himself among the "men of wit" who need cuckolds for their "diversion" (I.i.189-191).

In Crowne's farce *City Politiques* (1683) the homosocial aspect of bonding over stories of cuckolding is lacking, as discussed in the section on homosociality. Floria and Artall do not require the validation of other men, they were too egocentrical to make such a connection to the world beyond their own pleasure. The Podesta, a Whig, is duped by Florio. Florio is at heart a Tory, but he abandons politics to be able to seduce Rosaura, the Podesta's wife. For that purpose, Florio pretends to be dying from a venereal disease and to be repenting for his former sins. He is thus welcomed into the Podesta's house and able to carry on his affair under the Podesta's nose. In the second plot, Florio's former friend Artall seduces Emilia, the very young wife of the elderly lawyer Bartoline. However, while Florio and his former friend Artall manage to snatch the wives of two elderly Whigs, their actions are also shown to be predominantly self-serving. The play ends with the Whigs thwarted by the Viceroy; Florio's and Artall's actions have contributed nothing to the Whigs' defeat apart from adding humiliation. In Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671), on the other hand, the two rakes, Palamede and Rodophil, have actively fought for their king and contributed to his victory. In Behn's *The Rover* (1677) the cavalier Willmore is known to have fought for the king. While the royalist cause has failed, he has fought for a larger cause than his self-gratification. There are more examples from the first two decades after the Restoration; Florio and Artall, on the other hand, are not truly engaged in politics; while they complain about and mock the Whigs, seducing their wives has a higher priority than defeating them in the political arena. As politicians, they are failures. The Whigs might be morally inferior in the play; nevertheless, Florio and Artall are not portrayed as an alternative: they are superior to the Whigs, but they are too self-absorbed to lead Naples. Moreover, the fact that the Tories also choose to employ the services of the corrupt old lawyer Bartoline "point to their shared legal and judicial corruption" (Pacheco 2004 694).

Behn's Tory comedies were similarly complex. She exploited the popularity of cit-cuckolding (the seducing of citizen's wives, more specifically, Whig citizen's wives) while introducing witty royalist women (as she was herself). In *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), Lady Fancy marries the foolish old Whig Sir Patient Fancy because she and her lover Wittmore are too poor to maintain themselves. At the end of the play, Sir Fancy is explicitly transformed into a Tory (V.i.676-678), and Lady Fancy gains his money and Wittmore. Pacheco claims that the play's political meaning is complicated by Behn's hiding the motive of Lady Fancy's marriage until the closing scene and presenting Lady Fancy as a gold-digger

before (Betty Curer, the original actress, was known for playing unscrupulous gold-diggers and the casting thus amplified this aspect) (Pacheco 2004 692), but this sudden revelation might also have been a hint that to gain their political ends, royalists and Tories sometimes had to take measures which at first looked immoral. In 1682 Behn reworked one of the earliest comedies of the Restoration, Tatham's *The Rump* (first printed in 1660). In her play, *The Roundheads* (1682), the characters of Lady Desbro and her lover Freeman are added; Desbro sequesters Freeman's property, and Lady Desbro marries him to safeguard her love's property. Hughes points out that *The Roundheads* celebrates the Tory defeat during the Exclusion Crisis as a re-enactment of the Restoration, aligning the Tories with the Puritans (Hughes 2001 139). Pacheco adds that Lady Desbro's "marriage of loyalist self-sacrifice still seems an extraordinary invention on Behn's part" (Pacheco 2004 698). The self-sacrificing marriage was extraordinary, but the addition of a cuckolding plot was not; it demonstrates how the ploy of sexual mastery had become a standard allegory for political superiority. Behn's last cit-cuckolding comedy, *The Lucky Chance* (1685), is even less straight forward than its predecessors. While Julia in particular shares the trait of stealing from her wealthy Whig husband to give to her poor Tory lover, it is never made clear how forced her marriage to Sir Fulbank actually is. Julia claims in Act I. (I.ii.31) that her marriage is forced, but two lines later she blames herself for breaking her vows to her former lover Gayman, a fact Gayman is seemingly unaware of.

Whig playwrights, who were dominant after the Glorious Revolution, took another viewpoint on cuckolding. Steele's first play, *The Funeral* (1701), takes a different approach to ageing husbands and young men cuckolding them. The aged husband Lord Brumpton, who, for the majority of the play pretends to be dead, is mildly chided for his foolishness of having remarried and taken a much younger wife in addition to having disinherited his son. However, his wife and her lover, Cabinet, are the ones who are punished at the end by Lord Brumpton's steward revealing a letter in which Cabinet acknowledges having married Lady Brumptom before she married Lord Brumpton, thus voiding the Brumptons' marriage. Steele, a steadfast Whig, and writing not long after Collier's attack (which still inspired pamphlets against the theatre) might have designed some of his plot as a direct response to the earlier cuckolding comedies – Kenny points out that this is Steele's only comedy not to be based on earlier French or classic plays (Kenny 1971 3). Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1697) offers a different take on cuckolding in which, nevertheless, the motif of cuckolding is used to establish the superior man. Lady Brute, who suffers under her husband Sir John, is courted by her old lover Constant. However, Vanbrugh does not allow an actual consummation of the possible relationship between Constant and Lady Brute. The end of the play is more ambiguous than most; Lady Brute is of exemplary virtue and has not given in to temptation; Sir John, however, remains convinced that he is a "downright stinking cuckold" (V.v.79) despite outwardly assuring Constant that he knows that his wife has given him no

cause for jealousy. While Tory playwrights (such as Wycherley, Etherege and Behn) used sexual battles such as cuckolding to emphasise their political points, Whig playwrights of the early 18th century (such as Cibber and Steele) were "writing in a different world. […] they used moral battles rather than sexual ones to plot party politics" (Gollapudi 2001 401). In the sexual battles of the 17th century, the rakes become Tory heroes by using their virility to undermine the Whigs' masculinity.

Ambiguous sexuality

In the early Restoration, debates on sexual activity were politically charged. Charles II was considered to be lecherous, his pursuit of sexual encounters had a compulsive quality, and he took an extraordinary interest in fashion; he was, after all, responsible for bringing the modern three-piece suit to England even though it was intended to connote sobriety (Kuchta 2002 78). Charles II's sexual exploits (called "royal eroticism" by Weber 1990) emasculated the restored king. The viciousness of the court consisted not only in carnal sins as such, although that was part of it. The real scandal and the real worry was the power which the mistresses of Charles II and his brother James, the Duke of York, wielded while they were in favour. Although the king and his heir were excessively active heterosexuals, such an obsession with women is categorised as effeminate. An anonymous pamphlet called "The Haymarket Hectors" is one indicator that the problem with Charles's sexual obsession was not merely his civic irresponsibility and supposed martial insufficiency, but that these were seen as a threat to the "proper" relationship between the sexes. As Weber put it, "Charles's heterosexual promiscuity did not establish or consolidate his male and royal identity, but, on the contrary, called it seriously into question" (Weber 1990 196). The king and his subjects appear to have had different ideas of how the king was to establish his ultimate hegemonic masculinity; Charles II's public flaunting of sexual mores and the similar activities of his libertine courtiers indicate that those men believed that by exposing their sexual (and other) transgressions, they established their superiority. In the eyes of the citizens, however, they undermined it (see e.g. Barker-Benfield 1992 49-53).

While the rake's sexual appetite ultimately emasculated him, the emphasis on heterosexual conquests was a part of a discourse which shifted identity towards heteronormative gender roles. Mackie claims that "the rake, like modern patriarchy itself, retains prestige by shifting the ground of its orientation and representation; for although admonished for his transgression of the code of civility that ensures social cohesion, the rake's sexual profligacy can be appreciated as an expression of the very kind of heterosexual masculinity that is supportive of modern patriarchy" (Mackie 2009 9). Negotiating the moral demands which aimed at social cohesion and the affirmation of heterosexual masculine power influenced the playwrights' conceptions of their male characters, and the conflict was often expressed in the character of the rake, his sexuality and his reformation. Chernaik argues that

the rake's "compulsion to secure conquest after conquest, fleeing from any possibility of a stable relationship, is in many ways a manifestation of insecurity. Psychoanalytically, it can be seen as Oedipal, with the unattainable mother as origin of a series of unsatisfactory surrogates" (Chernaik 1995 3). This analysis is certainly too ahistorical, and the assumption of an Oedipus complex behind the rake's thirst for conquests is doubtful. The need to affirm (hetero-)sexual dominance and virility was the driving power of the rake's insecurity; he had a permanent need to prove his hegemonic masculinity. Fops understood this just as rakes did, but their attempts to cast themselves in the role of a heterosexual, virile man were doomed by their effeminacy and their failure to read social codes.

One reason why the rake's heterosexuality was less questionable than the fop's was the more positive portrayal of his character and the possibility of reformation within the rake. When the rake was reformed at the end, sexual ambiguity was often avoided. Rochester's alter ego in *The Princess of Cleve* (1682), Neymour, who never reforms, expresses desire for his "young intimate" Bellamore, calling him his "spouse," his "Hephestion" and "his "Ganymede", but Bellamore's first sentence after that is "One of her women, whom I have debauched" – the indication of homosexual desire is immediately counterbalanced by them talking about seducing women (II.ii.1-3). Neymour is not portrayed in a positive light, nor is he even superficially reformed by the end of the play. The sexual ambiguity of his character renders him more sinister than other rakes on stage. It is a sign of the impossibility of reforming him. Even in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), one of the most risqué plays, the portrayal of any scene which might hint at homoeroticism is carefully avoided. Horner manages to pry Mrs. Pinchwife away from Mr. Pinchwife while she is dressed up as her "brother". What happens when Horner and Mrs. Pinchwife are alone, with Mrs. Pinchwife still in boys' clothes, is only narrated by Mrs. Pinchwife when her husband presses her to reveal what happened (IV.ii.). After she confesses that Horner "kissed me a hundred times, and told/ me he fancied he kissed my fine sister" (IV.ii.21-22), he asks her "But you told me he did some beastliness to you,/ as you called it" (IV.ii.38-39). She answers that "he put the tip of his tongue between/ my lips, and so musled me. And I said I'd bite I" (IV.ii.42-43). Mr. Pinchwife's presumably angry interjection "what" before she finishes her answer leaves the audience wondering for one titillating moment longer what Horner put where. Mrs. Pinchwife's description is also teasing. One could ask if the tongue stands for something else and which lips are meant, but it is clear that the "beastliness" which Pinchwife suspected (anal sex in all likelihood) did not occur. Her later assurance that he has "the sweetest breath" brings Wycherley back into somewhat acceptable terrain by belatedly assuring her husband as well as the audience that he only kissed her mouth. It would be difficult to conclude from this scene that Horner is bisexual; he is fully aware that he was kissing a woman and not a boy. One might even argue against the idea that he is meant to be bisexual, as he did apparently not try to go any further than kissing while she was dressed as a boy.

Nevertheless, Wycherley clearly included the scene for double titillation: After the audience has already seen the actress in boys' clothes, they now imagine her dressed as a boy kissing a man.

In the plays, fops are often Narcissus-like in their obsession with their own bodies. The fop's heterosexuality is often questionable not because it is potentially deviant, but because it barely seems to exist at all. To the fop, sexuality seems to be a mere performance. While the behaviour of Horner (Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, 1675), Dorimant (Etherege, *The Man of Mode*, 1676), Willmore (Behn, *The Rover*, 1676) and other rakes indicates that their pleasure derives equally from their reputation as from the sexual act itself, fops seem merely interested in their reputation. They desire to be known for their intrigues, but they show little desire for anyone apart from themselves. When Sir Novelty Fashion flirts with Bellinda and Narcissa in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), he is fully aware that he is transgressing into another man's territory. Vanbrugh's version of the character, Lord Foppington, attempts to seduce Amanda in front of her husband in Act I seemingly more for convention's sake. They know what they have to do to gain a reputation for virility, but it is made plain that they lack any true sexual desire and thus virility.

In contrast to bonds of friendship, erotic relations between men would undermine their masculinity (see e.g. King and Senelick). Homosexuality was the danger inherent in the necessity for close bonds between men, especially before the rise of domesticity (see chapter 7). Both the rake's and the fop's heterosexuality was suspicious to the audience. Their transgressive behaviour and their public flaunting of the morals prevailing at the time (mainly among the middle class) offended the citizens of London. The question the audiences had to pose was where a character's transgressiveness would stop once they overstepped the boundaries of propriety. The suspicion against rakes in the comedies was bolstered by the general suspicion regarding the sexuality of their real life equivalents, the libertines. The libertine's sexual orientation has long attracted critical interest from historians. It is often taken for granted, for example, that Rochester, did not care whether he slept with a man or a woman (e.g. by Johnson 2004, Chernaik 1995 and King 2004). Those rumours were around during the Restoration. One such accusation was clearly politically motivated (King 2004 103) and it is hard to gauge the veracity of such rumours. While it is documented that French libertinism prided itself on its flaunting of heterosexuality and occasionally showcasing their sodomitical adventures, it is more obscure which kind of sexual transgressions would be deemed acceptable within the libertine groups in England (see Turner 2003). Rochester talked about sexual relations with his page in his poems, such as in the song "Love a woman" quoted above: "There's a sweet soft page of mine/ Does the trick worth forty wenches" (lines 15-16). In "Régime de Vivre", an anonymous poem that might be by Rochester, it says: "and missing my whore, I buggered my page" (line 12). However, in all those instances, the page substitutes a woman and his page is obviously not his social equal; the page was so much lower on the

internal hierarchy between men that he was nearly in the same position as a woman. The mere hint that homosexual relations might be acceptable among libertines was enough, however, to put their masculinity into question.

While Mackie claims that 18th-century portrayals of the rake differed from those of the Restoration rake-hero in their explicit heterosexuality (Mackie 2009 9), most of the early rakes were ostensibly heterosexual. There is little indication that any of Etherege's or Wycherley's rakes harboured feelings for other men (except Dorimant, perhaps, see below). Even the most undesirable rakes, such as those in Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675) and Charles Johnson's *The Masquerade* (1719), displayed sexual interest exclusively in women. However, playwrights hinted at homoerotic feelings between two friends on stage in some plays. These interactions are best explained with the homosocial continuum rather than as an indication of a sexual relationship.

The fop's sexuality was even more questionable. In modern scholarship, it has become of interest to scholars in queer studies. In King and Trumbach's work, for example, fops are listed as queer characters without much explanation for the categorisation. Staves and Shapiro, on the other hand, both argue for the fop as a mainly heterosexual character. Effeminacy and sodomy were not necessarily related (sodomists were generally considered effeminate, but not all effeminate men were considered sodomists). Shapiro argues that effeminacy was frequently used to connote a deviant form of heterosexuality. It was marked by subservience to a wife or mistress, lecherousness, the compulsive pursuit of sexual experience to the neglect of more "manly" activities, excessive attention to fashion and coiffure in an attempt to attract women more effectively, or, conversely, such personal vanity and self-absorption as to preclude any but the feeblest interest in sexuality at all (Shapiro 1988 400-401). Staves and Shapiro argue that the fop is effeminate because he is excessively heterosexual rather than homosexual. Charles II was, in this respect, close to fops in his relentless pursuit of women (see above).

Senelick claims that Staves overlooks the sodomitical associations of effeminacy when she argues that the fop's lack of sexual appetite was increasingly associated with the female or effeminate (Staves 1982 415, Senelick 1990 47). However, he does not directly invalidate her argument by citing such characters but deals in generalities about rakes and fops. In the wake of Foucault and McKeon, Senelick refines the arguments regarding the effeminate fop's sexuality which Staves and Shapiro had made earlier. He poses the question about the fop's sexuality in the title to his 1990 article "Mollies or Men of Mode?: Sodomy and the Eighteenth-Century London Stage". "Men of Mode" are mostly synonymous with fops in his article. The fops were not explicitly part of that peculiar subculture of the effeminate mollies. Carter points out that there was a significant difference between the transvestite, often misogynistic molly and the well-dressed fop, who preferred refined, female company (Carter

2001 147). While Senelick does not claim that every fop was homosexual, he believes that for "the evolution of modern homosexual identity, the theatre of this period casts a great deal of light" (Senelick 1990 33). Moreover, according to Williams, "[t]he fop whose effeminacies manifested themselves in social displays of overt delicacy became routinely displaced on the stage by the 'pretty gentleman' whose effeminate nature was more sexually defined and physical in nature" (Williams 1995 167). In other words, Senelick and Williams argue for an evolution of the fop into a more homosexual/queer figure. Senelick's article is very perceptive but suffers from the narrow selection of plays he analyses, which does not justify the broad assumptions he makes about the stage fop. His persistent claims that the restoration rake was, to use a modern term, bisexual and that the rakes were "egocentrically negligent of their bedmates' feelings" (Senelick 1990 47) are not bolstered by quotations and are questionable. At least in the comedy, the rake was nearly always heterosexual.

One problem in analysing a character's sexuality is that deviant sexuality was hardly ever mentioned on stage. Senelick points out that if sodomy is mentioned, the play is usually set in "foreign courts" and "exotic locales" (Senelick 1990 38). When Dennis defended the stage against Collier's attack, he emphasised that "that unnatural Sin, which is another growing Vice of the Age" was either not mentioned or only mentioned with the greatest "detestation" (Dennis 1939a 156). He claimed that the unnatural sin was a growing vice and one of "four reigning vices" of the time, the others being the love of women, drinking and gambling. While the latter three were frequently displayed on stage, sodomy was obviously considered to be too sinful to be even mentioned in most cases and may also have been seen to be unreformable. Dennis goes so far as to defend the portrayal of the "Love of Women" as "it has a Check […] peculiarly upon that unnatural Sin, in the Restraining of which, the Happiness of Mankind is, in so evident a Manner, concerned" (Dennis 1939a 156). Dennis's defence of the heterosexual deviance on stage points to an obsession with the "unnatural sin" of sodomy at the time.

Trumbach claims that "[i]n the eighteenth century it [sodomy] came to refer increasingly to male homosexual relations alone. […] This new exclusive adult sodomite was also supposed to be effeminate" (Trumbach 1987 74). This linguistic shift points to an increased social interest in homosexual practices. Senelick also detects a change in 18th-century society's "attitude toward nonstandard sexual behaviour" which, according to him, caused a "shift in the stage depiction of foppery" (Senelick 1990 36). Senelick's claim is that "on the stage, the 'bisexual' Restoration fop was about to be supplanted by a newer type of effeminate, whose interest in women's ways was seen as a token of his sodomitical leanings" (Senelick 1990 37). Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen argue against the idea that effeminacy became virtually identical with homosexuality: "In the long eighteenth-century effeminate homosexuality became the 'other' against which heterosexuality was defined, yet effeminacy was not exclusively connected to homosexuality" (Hitchcock/Cohen 1999 5). The question

of the sexuality of the rake and fop on stage remains debatable; there were few characters whose sexuality were unambiguously homosexual (see below); for the purposes of this study it is sufficient to observe that both the rake and the fop were potential suspects of sexual deviancy, whether the particular embodiment in a comedy was deviant or not.

Historians have noted that while there was a decrease in the prosecution of sodomy in Catholic countries, there was a marked increase in such prosecution in England (and Holland) in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Senelick summarises the possible reasons for this increase given by historians (as of 1990):

> a possible increase in sodomy itself as men of different classes were thrown together in the military services […]; the emergence of a sodomitical subculture from its earlier shadows; new codes of gender identity that identified manly virtue with masculine domination; and the rise of competitive capitalism and bureaucratic organisation, which needed to stigmatize behavioural patterns that imperilled their purposes. (Senelick 1990 37)

Apart from the first two, these are also reasons to curb libertinism and effeminacy, not "only" sodomy. The list thus bolsters the idea that sodomy was connected to both those fashions. The modes of masculinity exhibited by the rake and the fop were clearly a target of reform. Perhaps it added to the fervour that King William III himself was suspected to have intimate relations with his male favourites. Historians today are unsure about William's sexuality. He was known to have young and reportedly beautiful male favourites, and his relationship to his one acknowledged mistress was apparently largely intellectual (Bevan 1997 87). In comparison to his libertine predecessors, William's lack of sexual scandal was apparently both welcome and suspicious. However, even if William III was suspected of having homosexual relations, he was not portrayed as effeminate. Nevertheless, while fops were not necessarily homosexual, it would also be wrong to claim that no connection between effeminacy and homosexuality was made in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. It has now been established by scholars such as Trumbach, King and McKeon that the two concepts were increasingly associated during this period, although the connection does not seem to have become universal until the 1740s. Simpson and Trumbach argue that the creation of a homosexual characterised by transvestism and effeminacy, the molly, provided the "other" against which men could be judged and deemed heterosexual.

The most transgressive action between two men in a comedy was kissing. In the satire *Mundus Foppensis*,[21] kissing between men is equated with sodomy:

[21] Published anonymously, but attributed to John Evelyn.

> […] Men kiss Men, not Women, now.
> A most unmanly nasty Trick
> One Man to lick the other's Cheek;
> And only what renews the shame
> Of J. the first, and Buckingham:
> For who that loves as Nature teaches,
> That had not rather kiss the Breeches
> Of Twenty Women, than to lick
> The Bristles of one Male dear Dick.
> (12-19)

The poem's reference to the close relationship between James I and his favourite, the 1st Duke of Buckingham, puts the sin of sodomy at the Stuarts' feet, rather than connecting it with the present king, William III. Alan Bray has demonstrated for the early 17th century that kissing was an important display of male friendship as well as political power, but it always could also be read in a sodomitical light (Bray 1990 13). The ambiguity was present from the early Restoration comedy onwards: men kissing men was framed as conventional but problematic. Woodcock, the fop in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), attempts to marry Emilia, the female protagonist. His sexuality is, however, at least questionable. He kisses every man that appears stage and is excessively attached to Stanford, more so than the two other "impertinents" that plague him and more than Stanford's friend Lovel. In Act II Woodcock tells Stanford "I/ had not power to stay from thee, my dear bully-rock, for/ I can enjoy myself nowhere so well as in thy company. / Let me kiss thee, dear heart; 'Gad, I had rather kiss/ thee than any woman" (II.ii.). Moreover, a few lines later he tells Stanford that he intends to flee the world with him, should Stanford really leave the town. It is noteworthy that Woodcock considers it to be a compliment to Stanford that he prefers to kiss him rather than a woman. Woodcock might wish to indicate that he, quite properly, prefers the company of men to that of women and thus establishes himself as a more manly character. However, there is also the possibility that his interest in Stanford transgresses heterosexual boundaries, calling his masculinity further into question.

Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) does not display any interest in men or boys on stage other than the puzzling way in which his best friend Medley greets him: "Dorimant, my life, my joy, my darling sin!" (I.i.63). "My darling sin" might be interpreted as connoting erotic relations between them. Apparently, on stage, the two men kiss, by way of greeting as the Orange Woman, present in this scene, spits and remarks: "Lord, what a filthy trick these men have got of/ kissing one another!" (I.i.64-65). The speaker of the 1693 poem "The Rake: or, The Libertine's Religion"[22] links such behaviour with homosexual acts:

[22] Published anonymously but attributed to Richard Ames.

> Welcome, dear *Rogues*, thrice welcome to you all;
> Oh I could hugg you with such force,
> Till my Soul clove to ev'ry one of Yours.
> Let's joyn our *Lips*, at least our *Cheeks*,
> Come, come, my *Friends*, I'll not allow
> A *sullen Look*, or *Clouded Brow*;
>
> Of all known *Pleasures*, let us loose the Reins,
> And try by some exalted Stains,
> To be as merry as the *Antient Greeks*.
> (Stanza 5)

"The Antient Greeks" famously practiced pederasty. It is possible that some of the audience (nearly 20 years before the poem was published) would have made similar inferences in the scene between Dorimant and Medley; the Orange Woman certainly does. There is no further hint in the play, though, that Dorimant and Medley might be more than friends; Etherege seems to make fun both of the Orange Woman's own dirty mind and the aping of French manners displayed by Dorimant and Medley. It was not unusual in other plays for men to "salute" one another without any comment made. It is difficult to determine how those instances are to be analysed; the Orange woman is a hint that the lower classes considered such a custom to be sexually deviant, while the aristocracy, especially at court, was influenced by French customs and would have considered it within the bounds of heterosexuality. On stage, it might have been purposefully ambiguous.

If we presume some homoerotic undertone between Dorimant and Medley, there must be an erotic subtext between Loveless and Young Worthy in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). When Loveless and Young Worthy run into each other, Young Worthy is affectionately greeted by the starved Loveless, who exclaims "the sight of an old / Friend warms me beyond that of a new mistress" (I.i.53-54). At this stage in the play, Loveless is in desperate need of money to afford food and accommodation, so it is unlikely that he is sincere in his affection. It is remarkable, however, that this is the language that Loveless feels moved to use to achieve his goal. While there is no further erotic subtext between the men in the play, the greeting hints at a suspected homoerotic subculture among rakes and an acceptance of erotic innuendo between them.

Clodio in Cibber's *Love Makes a Man* (1700) is a fop with manners similar to those rakes. Homosocial relationships clearly play a central role in Clodio's life, and he kisses and embraces men frequently. When his father, Antonio, greets him when he comes home from Paris and introduces Charino, the father of his intended bride, the following exchange occurs:

> *Antonio*. Hah, my dear Clody, thou'rt welcome! let me kiss thee.
> *Clodio*. Sir – you kiss pleasingly – I love to kiss a man, in Paris we

> kiss nothing else. Sir, being my father's friend, I am your most
> obliged, and faithful humble servant. (*To Charino*)
> *Charino*: Sir-I-I-I-I like you. (*Eagerly*)
> (I.i.113-117)

The play is set in Spain, which like France is a Catholic country; this is possibly one of the plays Senelick has in mind when he observes that homoerotic subtext was more likely in plays set in foreign locales (see above). Kissing men is, as so often, strictly connoted as a French habit. Cibber voices the suspicion about the habit by adding "we kiss nothing else". A few lines later he boasts about his success with women and claims, rather hyperbolically, that he had two challenges sent up every morning "only for being pleasant company" to the ladies. When Charino answers "Ah, silly envious rogues! Prithee, what did you do to their ladies?" his servant Sancho answers in an aside: "Positively nothing" (I.i.281-287). Sancho's answer is ambiguous. Was Clodio actually despised by the ladies? In the general climate of mistrust against ladies, from which this play is not excluded, that seems unlikely. The two most likely interpretations are that he was either too cowardly to risk a challenge or not sexually attracted to women. Like most fops, Clodio makes extravagant claims about his success with women and his experience, but he fails to show and prove it on stage. Sancho's answer "nothing" also hints at Clodio's lack of (proper) virility: as stated above, "no thing" could stand for Clodio having no penis, that is, that he was impotent and incapable of doing anything with the ladies.

The language used between Lord Wronglove and Lord George Brilliant in Cibber's later comedy *The Lady's Last Stake* (1707) is even more fraught with erotic subtext, despite being set in England. When Lord George enters in the first scene, he is greeted by Wronglove with the exclamation "Ah, my Georgy! Kiss", to which Lord George replies "And kiss, and kiss again, my Dear – By *Ganymede*/ there's Nectar on thy Lips" (I.i.260-262). If the kissing was not sufficient to scandalise the audience, the appellation "Ganymede" was sure to suggest that these men were crossing the boundary to homoeroticism and that the "wrong love" did not only hint at the troubled relationship with his wife. However, Cibber's premise in all three of his successful original comedies (*Love's Last Shift*, 1696; *The Careless Husband,* 1704*; The Lady's Last Stake,* 1707) was that rakes only affected a wickedness they did not have in their heart. That was what made them reformable. The wickedness Lord Wronglove and Lord George affect is that of bisexuality/homosexuality, a sin that had been increasingly identified as a threat to the stability of the nation. It thus stands for the danger the rakish fashion among aristocratic men posed to the entire nation. As in all of Cibber's comedies, it is explicitly not the aristocratic man's fundamental nature which is flawed but his fashion of masculinity. What Young Worthy in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) terms "affectation for wickedness" (I.i.498) was the mode in which a number of aristocratic men exhibited their privileged masculinity. Surprisingly perhaps, then, Cibber's endeavour to make his male characters reformable led him to acknowledge the performative nature of masculinity to some extent.

Silvia, the female protagonist of Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer* (1706), is disguised as a man and is shocked when Kite, Plume's sergeant, kisses her after she agrees to enlist with him and Captain Plume:

> Silvia. What! Men kiss one another!
> Kite. We Officers do, 'tis our way; we live together like Man
> and Wife, always either kissing or fighting.
> (III.ii.234-236)

Silvia, the well-bred English country girl, clearly does not expect men to kiss other men. Kite implies homoeroticism if not outright homosexuality in the army. The way he talks about officers 'living together' is suggestive, a suspicion of long standing about the army (Braudy 2005 218). Kite is neither a fop nor a rake; he is a sergeant who apes the behaviour of his social superiors. The scene is ambiguous; it is unclear if Kite is expressing sexual interest in a character he believes to be a man. The play softens the scandal with the audience's awareness of Silvia's actual gender, but the custom of men kissing each other is clearly labelled as problematic and potentially transgressive behaviour.

Apart from such ambiguous kissing, there is at least one fop whose homosexuality seems to be obvious: Maiden in Baker's *Tunbridge Walks* (1703), who is quoted both by Staves and Senelick.[23] Maiden says in praise of himself that he was "put Prentice to a Milliner once, only a Gentleman took a fancy to me, and left me an Estate" (I.i.). That was clearly a non-entailed estate, but it is certainly suspicious that a man should leave another his fortune, especially one from a lower class. Senelick considers him to have been the "eromenos" (the younger, passive partner in a classic Greek pederast relationship) (Senelick 1990 45). Maiden claims, however, that it is normal "for abundance of People now-a-days/ take a fancy to a handsome Young Fellow" (I.i.). However, Senelick considers it to be curious that he was a lover of a wealthy gentleman as this "automatically puts him in the category of pathetic or catamite, whereas the fop was invariably the aggressor and active party in his liaisons" (Senelick 1990 45). Senelick is mistaken there, however. While the fop could be aggressive and active in the pursuit of his "amours", his cringing behaviour indicated subservience and the descriptions of fops in plays as well as in prose texts (factual and fictional) indicated that the fops were often considered to be passive. Sir Novelty Fashion, for example, in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) might actively pursue Berinthia and Narcissa, but his interactions with his discarded mistress Flareit indicate that she is more aggressive than him. Maiden ends with the assurance that "For I can Raffle with/ the Ladies, Dance with them, and Walk with 'em in publick, I never/ desire any private Love-favours from 'em" (Senelick 1990 I.i.). He has just been threatened by the cowardly militia captain Squib and the interchange ends with Squib promising that he will recommend Maiden as a partner for dancing and Maiden will recommend him as a lover. Squib calls him frigid and Maiden muses, when he is alone, that

[23] Despite this homoerotic subtext, the play remained in print until the end of the 18th century.

Squib is a "rude monster" and that, had Squib drawn his sword, he would have swooned. The double-entendre of sword is obvious. Baker appears to pass judgment on the fop as a stock type in these lines along with a judgement of cowardly officers. The fop, he hints, desires the reputation of publicly close relations with women while feeling no desire to engage with them sexually. The charges of sodomy became more frequent at the time, and Dennis considered it to be the growing vice of the age (see above). Maiden pretends to love women and be loved by them, but his facade of heterosexuality is dubious at best.

The only scene in which an openly homosexual man expresses clear desire for another man occurs in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) when Coupler, who has arranged the marriage of Lord Foppington and Hoyden, fondles Lord Foppington's rakish younger brother, Young Fashion. Young Fashion is so delighted by the prospect that he might steal the heiress from his brother with Coupler's help that he lets Coupler touch and kiss him, which he has refused before and even promises that Coupler will have a claim to his body in addition to £5000 once the plan has prospered. It is hard to judge how serious he is in offering his body in exchange for a fortune. Coupler's reply could be ironic or hopeful: "Say'st thou so, my Hephestion?" (I.iii.203). It is worth noting that this rather explicit homosexual suggestion is countered by the fact that in the original cast Young Fashion was played by a woman (see above). It is possible that Vanbrugh added this scene after the casting change. The scene would have been more scandalous if both actors had been men. There are parallels to the scene in Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1685) when Gayman agrees to prostitute himself (not knowing that the woman who pays him is his mistress, Julia). Gayman's as well as Young Fashion's passiveness in the encounter and willingness to comply make their sexuality more questionable than that of the typical rake, but in the case of Young Fashion he is further emasculated by at least verbally agreeing to prostitute himself to a man.

Conclusion

The sexual intrigues and the infamy the comedy gained through its portrayal of the sexual side of the characters on stage were certainly part of a strategy to attract audiences. However, they were also an indication of the way in which playwrights struggled to portray gender as sexuality became part of gender identity. The portrayal of the rake's and fop's sexuality was part of the discourse which established heterosexual virility as an integral part of masculinity. The trope of cuckolding and other means of sexual warfare undermined this purpose. While it established the heterosexual virility of the ideal man, it went against the moral feelings of the audience and often exposed the rake as controlled by his desires. Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683) is perhaps the most blatant example. The Whigs are ridiculed, but as argued above, the young Tories are not a truly desirable alternative. Neither Florio's nor Artall's intrigues with the wives of Whigs are motivated by political motives; they cannot resist a

beautiful woman. In Behn's plays, for example, the main motive for cuckolding is rarely a deliberate attempt to make a political point. The rakes are as lustful and selfish as their opponents. This was ultimately the downfall of the rake as a positive exponent of masculinity and made him unsuitable as a model of hegemonic masculinity. His fixation with sexual exploits revealed his fundamental egocentrism which made him unsuitable for government. (When Thomas Wharton's authority was challenged in parliament on account of his exploits as a young man, it was not only the amorality of the act that was at stake. See chapter 3.)

The fop, on the other hand, exposes his effeminacy and inadequacy in his thwarted attempts to emulate the rake's intrigues and conquests. In Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) Dorimant's dominance is underlined by Sir Fopling's ridiculous attempts to imitate him. Later, when the rake and the fop became conflated, the fop's role changed slightly. In Vanbrugh's *The Relaps*e (1696), one of the most complex plays, Lord Foppington's attempted seduction of Amanda (Loveless's wife) parallels Loveless's seduction of Berinthia. The difference is the willingness of the woman, not the action. Foppington is unable to see that Amanda's resistance is genuine, but it is doubtful that Loveless would have. Rather than emphasising Loveless's superior masculinity, the scene underlines his own unworthy and ultimately unmanly behaviour.

The increasing popularity of the fop and the conflation of the rake with the fop can best be explained in connection to his effeminacy, which set the boundaries of acceptable expressions of masculine identity. As the excessive pursuit of sexual conquests was framed as effeminate (with varying success), the rake, who was largely defined by his sexual exploits, lost his claim to hegemony. He was conflated with the fop, a development that brought forth popular figures such as Wildair in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699). Wildair and other rake figures had to be cured of their philandering ways to become functioning parts of the patriarchal order. If they failed to do so, as the fops always did (see chapter 7), they had to be punished at the end (e.g. Pix, *The Beau Defeated*, 1700; Burnaby, *The Modish Husband*, 1702; Johnson, *The Masquerade*, 1719; Cibber/Vanbrugh, *The Provoked Husband*, 1728).

06: Violence and Masculinity

Violent potential

Many of the male characters in comedies of the period between the Restoration and the mid-18th century had a strong potential for violence. However, due to the genre-specific restrictions of comedies, fights or acts of extreme violence were not common. Ben Ross Schneider observes that "a comedy cannot treat situations requiring a great amount of courage without being in danger of becoming a tragedy" (Schneider 1971 73). Nobody can die in a comedy; even serious injuries are rare. There is, however, an abundance of challenges and incidental violence towards social inferiors. In the majority of comedies, the causes of a fight or a duel are trivial, which writers of prescriptive prose, even those in favour of duelling, usually rejected as not befitting proper gentlemen (Peltonen 2003 181-184). As many playwrights aimed to be reformers as well as entertainers, a similar trend to that which Elizabeth A. Foyster traces in general prescriptive prose, namely an increase in strictures concerning violence (Foyster 1999b), is reflected in the plays. Masculinity and violence have been shown to be linked across several cultures and time periods (Bourdieu 2001, Whitehead 2002 35-38). This applies also to the time between the Restoration and the mid-18th century; despite a decline in violence during this period (Shoemaker 1999a), violent crime was more widespread than it is today (see Stater 1999 and Hurl-Eamon 2005). Violence expressed in fighting was endemic among English men during the period and permeated all classes. A French visitor to England wrote in 1719 that "anything that looks like Fighting is delicious to an Englishman" (quoted by Foyster 1999a 151). In comedies by playwrights sympathetic towards (or part of) the movement for the Reformation of Manners, the link between aggression and masculinity was portrayed as a problem which needed to be fixed, particularly in young aristocrats. The historical evidence provides two considerations for this chapter: firstly, the use of violence was common; and secondly and more importantly, the time of the study saw a decline in this widespread violence.

In most comedies, wit is portrayed as superior to sheer violence; those rakes who embodied hegemonic masculinity such as Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) and Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) do not dominate the stage with physical violence. If a rake was representative of hegemonic masculinity, he had better control over himself than other characters in the play, but there could also be no doubt about their courage or ability to win a fight. All rakes contained the potential for violence and would occasionally engage in duels, but in some early comedies, violent potential was positively connoted as virility and vitality. However, after 1688 (broadly speaking), the rake on stage became more violent despite the aforementioned decline in violence in

England. In this period, the rake began to be placed as the negative counter-example of the polite gentleman, who embodied the ideals which were formed in the cultural negotiations of the late 17th century. Mackie claims that this type of "modern English gentleman" is identified as the first type of "hegemonic masculinity" (Mackie 2009 1) but this involves a misunderstanding of the underlying concept, which had been a necessary part of a functioning patriarchy. In the 18th century, those non-violent, restrained gentlemen became the embodiment of modern hegemonic masculinity, while hegemonic masculinity was embodied by the rake in the earlier texts. What Mackie means is that the modern English man, by which she means the figure commonly called the polite gentleman, was the first example of a man embodying hegemonic masculinity, who was not only in full control of his passions, as the rake never was, as well as those below him, but who also actively resisted violent acts (the polite gentleman will be further discussed in chapter 7).

The fops, on the other hand, avoided violence due to their cowardice, not their restraint. Fops tried to use wit, which always failed (see chapters 4 and 5), and their fashionable appearance to establish themselves as superior, rather than using violence for this purpose (see chapter 4). They were often aware that valour was an integral part of aristocratic masculine identity but their attempts to emulate it were bound to fail, as the fop's valour could always only be an illusion. While fops were occasionally aggressors, they were more frequently the victim of violent acts. Internal hegemony between men, with the fop at the bottom, was often established by violence. In Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), for example, Stanford kicks those "impertinents" that annoy him so much, while in Otway's *Friendship in Fashion* (1678) Goodvile has his footman tie up Caper and Saunter as if they were common criminals. While the sword fight among rakes (and other aristocratic men) established both men as valiant descendants of warriors, they humiliated aristocratic fops by treating them like servants.

The following chapter will deal with various forms of interpersonal violence, but omit warfare. Firstly, the majority of comedies did not deal with the topic and secondly and more importantly, the question of the army and England's engagement in foreign wars was one of the most contentious political topics during most of the period (see chapter 2). To detangle those contemporary politics of war and state from ideas of masculinity regarding the portrayal of war is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Private violence

A man's honour was tied to the control he had over his household regardless of his social status (Foyster 1996 215). Aggression was part of the instruments some men employed to maintain their superior position over the women and servants in their household (Foyster 1999a 151) and thus sought to establish their hegemony. Outright domestic violence as a valid means to establish hegemony and to

control the household was not as accepted. On the contrary, Foyster proves that excessive violence towards one's wife could be emasculating; while failure to discipline a wife would bring dishonour (Foyster 1996 216 & 223-224), excessive force was also dishonourable (Foyster 1996 221) despite the fact that physical superiority was part of the claim of hegemony over women (Foyster 1996 215). Some men demonstrated their misunderstanding of valid masculinity and honour by not understanding that while men were supposed to be physically dominant, to use their physical superiority rather than their mental superiority was less honourable and indicated a lesser form of masculinity. In the comedies, no positive characters use physical violence to establish dominance over women; that was reserved for the internal hegemony among men. One example in a comedy is the ridiculous Poltrot in Lee's *The Princess of Cleve* (1682). He summarises why he feels he is a worthy gentleman: "For I know how to repartee with the best, to rally/ my wife, to kick her too if I please, sir […]" (I.ii.217-218). Poltrot and Saint-André in *The Princess of Cleve* are fops rather than rakes. Poltrot's casual inclusion of kicking his wife when he pleases thus shows not only how common domestic violence was, but also that it emasculated a man rather than proving his value.

Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) is an illustration of the futility of and emasculation through excessive violence. Pinchwife is obsessively concerned about becoming a cuckold (see chapter 5) but his attempts to control his wife only make her curious about the fashionable world and Horner. Scene IV.ii. begins with Mrs. Pinchwife/Margery telling her husband what happened between her and Horner (a kiss) and him forcing her to send a letter to Horner. When she starts objecting to the way he phrases the letter, he threatens her with a penknife: "Write as I bid you, or I will write whore with this/ penknife on your face" (IV.ii.99-100). He continues to threaten her, but when he walks out of the room to fetch wax, she writes a second letter and manages to switch the letters before he sends it. The scene is symbolic of their marriage; Pinchwife's irrational jealousy and his violent outbursts cause him to lose control. While Sparkish's refusal to exert any form of control over his fiancée Alithea results in her marrying Harcourt, Pinchwife's excessive control at the other end of the spectrum is just as effeminate. Harcourt's ruthless deception of Sparkish (and Pinchwife) and his forwardness with Alithea, who cannot resist the onslaught of his proposal and arrangements for an immediate marriage, make him superior to both of them and not only establish him at the top of the internal hierarchy between men but also prove his superiority over even the wittiest of women. He can control Alithea without resorting to the cruel and ultimately futile methods Pinchwife employs, which only shows Pinchwife's impotence. Pinchwife is a tyrant; Harcourt is a leader.

Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1697) has a similar premise. The husband, Sir John Brute, starts the play with a soliloquy on how much he hates marriage and especially his wife (I.i.1-13). He does not let any opportunity pass to tell her of his contempt for both her and for marriage. Lady Brute's soliloquy

shortly after their first exchange mocks the idea that a woman might reform a man (see chapter 7) – "I thought I had charms enough to govern him and that where there was an estate, a woman must needs be happy" (I.i.46-47). She concludes that because he has broken his vow to be kind to her, she would be justified in breaking her vow to be faithful (I.i.62-65). Within the first few minutes of the play, Vanbrugh has already reminded the audience that a husband's duty is to be kind to his wife and that if he is not, his wife might come to dangerous conclusions. The play remains ambiguous in its justification of cuckolding brutes. Constant admires Lady Brute and she initially plans to enter into an affair with him, but eventually becomes reluctant. Part of her reluctance stems from her virtue, but she is also afraid that if she gives into Constant's seduction, he will tire of her (IV.iv.151-212). Ultimately, nothing immoral happens between them in the play but not because of her virtue or Sir John reforming. The reason Sir John is not a cuckold in the play, but believes himself to be one, is that Lady Brute and Constant are always disturbed. In the last scene of the play, Constant forces Sir John to acknowledge his wife's virtue publicly, although Sir John remains convinced that Constant has cuckolded him.

Despite his use of violence towards his wife, Sir John admits in in his opening soliloquy that he is a coward and that the reason for not turning his wife out of doors was his fear of her relatives challenging him – "I dare not/ draw my sword, though even to get rid of my wife" (I.i.12-13). When Sir John accuses Constant of having cuckolded him and Constant denies the accusation, he offers to settle the manner in a duel, which Sir John hastily declines, ready to make an outward show of believing Constant (V.v.67-71). Constant's friend Heartfree mocks him in an aside: "I know the knight […]. His dear/ body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet" (V.iv.4-5). Sir Brute decides that "a living dog is better than a dead lion" (V.v.88) and it would be better to live with the suspicion of being a cuckold than to risk his own life. The ending of the play is ambiguous, however. It is not clear for how long Lady Brute will be safe once she is alone with her husband again. It is telling that Sir John's companions are Lord Rake and Colonel Bully. One stands for the peerage, the other for the military. Both are violent ("rake" here has clearly more associations with violence than sexual liberties) and friends with a man who abuses his wife. Vanbrugh connects those in control of the country with a disdain for marriage and domestic violence, turning the play into a political allegory. Constant and Heartwell convey hopeful alternatives, but they have rakish tendencies too. Constant, after all, who spends most of the play plotting to cuckold Sir John and Heartwell, while contemplating marriage with Bellinda, is familiar enough with Hobbes to quote him in an aside. Immediately afterwards, Lady Brute refers to her husband as atheist, linking Heartwell and Lord John as sharing a similar philosophy (V.v.27-28). There is a fine line between Heartwell and Sir John, a constant danger that the reliable men of government might fall prey to the dark side.

No other plays were as concerned with domestic violence as Vanbrugh's and Wycherley's. However, in Johnson's *The Masquerade* (1719) Smart's mistreatment of his mistress Caelia hints at violence. The way he speaks with Caelia is very similar to the way Sir John Brute in *The Provoked Wife* talks to his wife. He constantly threatens to throw her out on the street, destitute, abusing the power he holds over her after he has seduced her. The play is remarkably sympathetic to Caelia as a "fallen" woman and shows her plight as being more dependent on his good will than a wife would be. Sir John, in Vanbrugh's play, fears the reaction of his wife's family, should he throw her out. Caelia has no family to back her up. Her fear of him and her cousin Sophronia's assurance that everyone hates Smart and pities Caelia hints at darker events (I.i.) which Johnson chose not to depict on stage. Sophronia is afraid of marrying Sir George Jealous because of his fits of jealousy. Again, while physical abuse is never directly mentioned, Sophronia's "trembling" at the thought of marrying him indicates that she fears violent reactions caused by suspected disobedience/infidelity, which Foyster demonstrates was common at the time (Foyster 1996).

Wives were not the only members of a nobleman's household. Young children never appear on stage, but there are many parents. Fathers especially are seldom drawn positively and some use threats of violence or violence in their efforts to control their children. This ranges from locking up daughters (e.g. Sir Tunbelly Clumsy's locking up Hoyden in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696)) to beating their adolescent sons in public (e.g. Sir Harry Gubbin in Steele's *The Tender Husband* (1703)). The results and message were similar to those Vanbrugh and Wycherley described for abusive behaviour towards a wife: children could not be controlled by violent measures and their rebellion brought embarrassment to their fathers. On the other hand, rakes or other men beating their servants was usually depicted as comic. It is striking how many rakes casually abuse their servants: Sir Frederick Frolick's treatment of his French servant Dufoy in Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* (1664) is one example. Dufoy complains that Sir Frederick had beaten him over the head the night before. Sir Frederick gives him some money and bids him to consider the matter closed. In Shadwell's *The Libertine* (1675) Don John treats his servant as brutally as he beats everybody else. Loveless's behaviour towards Snap in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) is not as physical, but he does not care about his servant's physical needs (such as food and sleep). Beating a woman, however, was outside the bounds of the comical. Beating men of other classes, on the other hand, could be comical. In the same manner, country gentlemen or ridiculous citizens often beat their sons and thwarted their every movement, always with little success (e.g. in Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683), Burnaby's *The Modish Husband* (1702), Steele's *The Tender Husband* (1705) and Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728)). Positive characters had too much restraint and were too reasonable to lose their control towards their servant, controlling even them without excessive force. In conclusion, even in those comedies (especially of the early Restoration) in which

duelling and other forms of violence were framed positively, this positive connotation was contained to fights among social equals: ridiculing a fop by beating him was a valid way to prove his inferiority. There was no necessity to establish physical dominance over women, children or servants, whom the patriarchal system placed so firmly below them that it was dishonourable and ridiculous to seek to establish dominance the same way it was established among equals.

Single Combat on Stage

In Stater's study of the conflict between Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton in 1712, he observes that "the lessons they learned in the course of their rivalry would be crucial for the survival of aristocratic dominance in the 18th century: mastering the art of parliamentary politics, deploying the resources of the law, and exploiting the opportunities created by new forms of wealth" (Stater 1999 10). Despite these lessons, the two men eventually killed each other in a duel rather than continuing their feud with those more modern means. Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton are exemplary for their generation of aristocrats, caught between an increasingly modernised country and honour. An aristocratic man's honour was bound to his courage and the main means to prove himself as honourable and courageous in the late 17th and early 18th century was fighting a duel. The cultural debate around the duel was fierce, with reformers of manners (and other citizens) repeatedly pushing for legislation against duelling during the period; Peltonen, for example, identifies three periods in which opposition to the duel was fierce: the 1660s, the 1690s and the 1710s (Peltonen 2003 207-212). For the purpose of this chapter, it suffices to say that during the entire period there were several attempts to introduce effective legislation to curb duelling, some of which succeeded, some of which failed, but that duelling remained prevalent. Kathleen Leicht claims that the "light-hearted treatment of duelling […] veils the seriousness of the cultural debate" (Leicht 2007 267) but this light-heartedness was deceptive. In many comedies, the duel was not treated light-heartedly at all, even if might seem that way. Depending on the ideology of the playwright, the duel could be a signifier of hegemonic masculinity or the opposite.

While modern scholars as well as contemporaries have sometimes seen the duel as a continuation of knightly traditions, the duel in its modern form was rooted in the Italian Renaissance and its conception of courtly behaviour. The duel was a combination of the old culture of honour and the new ideology of politeness (Peltonen 2003 2-5). A formal duel was considered to be a form of controlled violence, a way to preserve the old-fashioned sense of honour through battle while at the same time preserving social order and not involving third parties (bystanders, hosts etc.). This section will discuss all forms of single combat on stage, not only formal duels. It is not always clear if a challenge issued in a play is meant to be a formal duel or not. While there were manuals outlining the proper and formal

way to duel, actual duels would often be much more spontaneous. Some of the fights in comedies are very spontaneous, where the opponents just pull out their swords and start fighting. Examples include Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), when Loveless draws on Lord Foppington for courting his wife (II.i.), or Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), when Sparkish, the fop, pretends to threaten Harcourt (II.i.). On other occasions, a more formal challenge is offered, but there is often no discussion of formal details such as seconds. There may be several reasons for portraying fights and duels like this: it portrayed formal duels as insufficient to curb aristocratic violence, it passed judgement on unrestrained characters and it could cater to the demands of stage entertainment. While theorists and commentators, both contemporary and modern, might point out that spontaneous fights cannot properly be called duels, the reaction of the characters in the play generally shows that they make little distinction and that no matter how spontaneous a fight is, the men involved act like gentlemen and display their masculinity and their class by duelling.

The duel, just like chivalry, was a modern manifestation of aristocratic ideology that combined modern concepts of individualism with older concepts of honour (see above). As such, it could become part of a masculine identity or, as Low calls it, "an overdetermined sign of masculine identity that helped to stabilize significantly volatile notions of both rank and gender" (Low 2003 3). The duel was, according to Low, "an outgrowth less of the joust, a combat in itself, than of the chivalric revival of which the sixteenth century joust was itself a product. Certainly the chivalric tradition provided early modern noblemen with a stronger connection to the masculine identity of the medieval aristocrat than did the judicial duel,[24] not least because the code of chivalry promoted individualism" (Low 2003 16). Social historians generally attribute the popularity of the duel to a crisis of the aristocracy in the Renaissance (Low 2003 3), as a fashion that was strongly rooted in the aristocratic class and helped to redefine and renew crumbling aristocratic values. The proper duel came to England in the 1570s along with the rapier. The Italian rapier gave no advantage to superior strength, unlike the English broadsword, and rewarded superior expertise. Fencing became a sport, but it did not remain confined to elegant exercise. The concept of duelling found fertile ground in England and the duel was soon deeply entrenched in the culture of the English Renaissance as indicated not only by anti-duelling tracts but also by references to it in fencing manuals, in plays and in other texts (Low 2003 1). While the duel became a significant part of aristocratic culture, it never lacked critics (Kiernan 1988 8). The proto-bourgeoisie in the Renaissance already criticised the duel, and "their views of duelling indicate a very different system of values linked to such basic assumptions as gender identity" (Low 2003 4).

[24] Trial by combat, a tradition in medieval law (Low 2003 12-13).

While Oliver Cromwell implemented strong anti-duelling policies during the Interregnum and the custom seems to have been in decline, it was revived after the Restoration. Commentators complained about the increasing frequency of duels and saw in it a backlash against Cromwell or even a method for the royalists to punish those who had collaborated (Peltonen 2003 201). We know of over 200 duels between gentlemen and nobles in Charles II's reign alone (Stater 1999 6). The duel was a signifier of the instability of institutions and the resistance the elite felt towards modern institutions such as the courts of law. Kiernan also argues that the duel was a result of the aristocrats' need to distinguish themselves from the rising middle class, which threatened their identity (Kiernan 1988 1-19). In 1668, one of the most notorious duels of the Restoration took place. The 2nd Duke of Buckingham killed the man he had cuckolded, the Earl of Shrewsbury (Peltonen 2003 204). Peltonen cautions that while such stories might at first suggest that "the frequency of duelling in Restoration England could be accounted for by the rise of rake culture", the conclusion would be wrong: while rakes were involved in many duels, so were other gentlemen. Peltonen suggests that duels lacked the element of outrage that was characteristic of rake culture and points out that Shadwell's play *The Libertine* (1675) "was replete with violence, but there was not a single duel in it" (Peltonen 2003 204). Peltonen recognises the importance of Restoration plays in the discourses and debates around duelling (Peltonen 2003 184-189), particularly in making the distinction between true men of honour and fops, who craved the reputation for honour, on the stage (Peltonen 2003 181-190).

The duel was meant to keep violent and disruptive behaviour in check by codifying quarrels about honour. Nothing but honour was at stake and the conflict would be considered resolved after the duel. It did not have, however, the quality of divine judgement that the trial by combat had. The challenger aimed to punish his opponent for an insult and to prove his own masculinity and show that he was the better man (Low 2003 17). The proper duel consisted of a challenge (oral or written), a challenger, a defendant and combat and it resulted from an alleged lie. If one man accused another of a crime or dishonour the other had not committed (or, of course, was not willing to admit to), he could be challenged to a duel (Low 2003 12). In practice, the reasons could be trivial, such as the question whether Nell Gwynn was the most handsome mistress of Charles II (Peltonen 2003 203). Stater names other matters, often trivial, as causes for duels in which men were seriously or even fatally wounded: "an argument at court, a careless word spoken at a gaming table, or a disputed point of precedence" (Stater 1999 6). Although there were prescriptive manuals as to the formalities of a duel, it is an misconception that duels always followed protocol. A new development in the Restoration was that the seconds would fight too, which was not part of the original concept of the duel (Peltonen 2003 203). When Buckingham and Shrewsbury duelled, one of the seconds died on the spot while Shrewsbury died two months later (Peltonen 2003 204). In the famous duel between Lord Mohun and

the Duke of Hamilton in November 1712, Hamilton mortally wounded Mohun. He was then killed by Mohun's second (Stater 1999 234-235).

The duel was a useful ploy for the playwright; a challenge of any kind heightened the tension on stage and the duel provided an opportunity to insert action into the play. As Kiernan points out, the modern duel was theatrical in its essence (Kiernan 1988 10). There was widespread public interest in duels and even the most insignificant duel was thought important enough to be reported in newsletters and private correspondence (Peltonen 2003 205). Single combat provided an opportunity for any male character to prove his masculinity not only on the more obvious level of courage and sword skills but also by extension via his sexual capability. In the epilogue to *The Country Wife* (1675) Wycherley points out how sexual virility may be faked/performed by effeminate and old men, who make a show out of having mistresses. Other men (or indeed, women) would have little opportunity to verify their claims of virility. In personal combat a man had to prove himself without being able to take recourse to performative trappings. A fight, or the threat of a fight, on stage is thus always more than a welcome element of action in a play: It is a window into a character's true identity. Playwrights as well as audiences were fully aware of the performative aspects of character. A fight stripped a man down to his core. Leicht points out that discussions about duelling are more frequent than actual duels on stage and claims that "[i]nstead of functioning as an important dramatic action, as we might expect, the duel frequently represents an occasion for discourse" (Leicht 2007 275). This discourse was always centred on notions of (aristocratic) masculinity and gave the playwright an opportunity to bring up the topic of (hegemonic) masculinity by using duelling and other forms of violence as a shorthand to establish internal masculine hierarchies.

For the ritual of the duel, the outcome was irrelevant (Peltonen 2003 2). The goal was to restore the opponents' honour. In the world of the theatre, however, the outcome matters. Unfortunately, much of this is lost in the written text; stage directions usually just read "*they fight*". The actors' movements during this fight told the audience much about the characters they played; Low devotes one chapter of *Manhood and the Duel* (2003) to the sense of masculine space while fencing, drawing on Elizabethan fencing manuals. Very little of this can be deduced for fight scenes in a comedy by drawing on the comments the opponents or spectators make. The conquered body is effeminised; there is always an analogy to the conquered body and the female as well as the immature male body (Low 2003 71). The duel is thus similar to the act of cuckolding another man; it establishes an internal hegemony. The difference is that while in the plays men often cuckolded merchants – men of another, lower social class – the duel served to establish an internal hierarchy among men of the same class. To fight a duel was a mark of a gentlemen in the fluid English class system. In Joseph Arrowsmith's *The Reformation* (1673) for example, Lysander, a citizen, is ridiculed for not challenging his wife's lover Pisauro to a duel

but instead taking out his anger on his wife (V.i.). The play is a satire on libertinism and the scene indicates that libertines were too ready to fight duels, but it also demonstrates that citizens are inferior to gentlemen, as Lysander lacks the courage to face a man in combat and instead abuses his wife, who is inferior to him.

Most playwrights were born into the lower gentry or the middle class and were sceptical about the ideas underlying the duel. As Low points out, we cannot ignore the social disparity between playwrights and the men they depicted (Low 2003 4). As discussed in chapter 2, playwrights in the early Restoration until approximately the 1680s were predominantly Tories with ties to the court. Etherege and Wycherley were part of the circle of Court Wits, sympathetic to the court and Tories. Steele, on the other hand, was born into the lower gentry and was of course not only a playwright; he was actively involved in the Whig party and mainly recognised as an essay writer and a reformer of morals who, among other targets, wrote against the practice of duelling (Kiernan 1988 96-97). His plays were written with the same purpose in mind as his essays in *The Tatler* or *The Spectator*. In his preface to *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) he states that he wrote the play just for the one scene where the protagonist declines a challenge. If the selection of plays here suggests that there was an increasing hostility towards the duel, this development was strictly limited to the stage. While the political and class affiliations of the playwrights are connected to social developments (chapter 2), the connections are too complex to allow a detailed diachronic analysis of the status of the duel. However, the duel in drama is a good indicator of the play's ideal of masculinity even if the playwright does not point it out in the preface. Low's claim for the Renaissance Drama still holds true for the Restoration drama: "The attitude that the play presents towards the duel, whether romantic, ironic, or farcical, offers implicit judgement of the modern construction of honor, reputation and the man's role in society" (Low 2003 27). The duel's ideological position in contemporary discourse as well as the entertaining qualities of a fight made the duel a perfect vehicle for playwrights to express their ideas of honour and masculinity.

An example of an uncritical function of the duel as an affirmation of aristocratic masculinity can be seen in Etherege's early Restoration comedy *The Comical Revenge* (1664). Etherege, a man who was born into the lower gentry, became part of the circle of Court Wits after this play was staged, which might indicate that the play shared the values of those peers. Therefore, the duel between Beaufort and Bruce merits a closer analysis as it is important for the plot development as well as for the affirmation of masculinity and virility/valour. The offence that prompts the duel is simple: Graciana, whom Bruce is in love with, fell in love with Beaufort while Bruce was in prison. When Bruce encounters Graciana and Beaufort he demands that Beaufort relinquish his claim to Graciana's love (despite the fact that Graciana has declared her love for Beaufort). Beaufort orders him to go away, to which Bruce replies that he is no devil that can be forced to obey, and that he has "charms" to frighten Beaufort

away from Graciana. The stage direction has Bruce laying his hand on his sword after he says "charms", linking the sword and thus metaphorically the phallus with magic (see chapter 5). Graciana takes the bait and throws her arms around Beaufort to protect him, thus seemingly confirming Bruce's assertion that Beaufort's masculinity is inferior to his own.

Graciana's brother Lovis, whom both she and Beaufort have labelled as someone who cherishes old-fashioned notions of honour, delivers Bruce's formal challenge to Beaufort. Beaufort expected the challenge and welcomes it, declaring that:

> My honour is as forward as my love.
> On equal wings of jealousy they move:
> to my rival will in neither yield;
> I've won the chamber, and will win the field. (IV.i.).

Beaufort is part of this world of honour and heroism, as made evident by his use of the heroic couplet throughout the play. His honour, understood traditionally as his readiness to meet a challenge and fight, is linked to his success in love. The equation of sexual conquest and love was customary and is taken as self-evident by Beaufort. The difference between his understanding and the stauncher notion of honour embraced by Bruce and Lovis is that in his case he considers it to be fair game to snatch another man's prospective bride away, even though that man is in prison for an honourable cause (in this case, for being a royalist who was falsely accused of plotting against Cromwell). Not only virility and valour are at stake but also membership in the exclusive circle of aristocratic masculinity. Lovis appears to approve of Beaufort's response and states that "Your emulation, sir, is swoln so high,/ You may be worthy of his victory" (IV.i.). Lovis's praise is tempered: he appears to have questioned, and may still be questioning, Beaufort's right to move in aristocratic circles; only now has he managed to "emulate" them to an extent that he may, but only may, be worth Bruce's time. The acceptance (and the manner of the acceptance) of a duel was a passkey into the world of aristocratic masculinity. In this early Restoration play proximity to people of higher or equal rank is part of status. As Lovis implicates, the duel was an intimate interaction and one in which the opponents would meet each other as equals. To be challenged to a duel rather than being offered another form of violence was a tacit acknowledgment of the other man's status.

Beaufort's second is his cousin Sir Frederick Frolic, a boisterous rake who, unlike him, is not reformed. For all his unruliness and disregard for the law he takes the matter of duelling seriously. When he comes to his cousin, he declares that

> I had notice of your quarrel, which brought
> me hither so early with my sword to serve you. But
> dares so zealous a lover as your lordship break the
> commandment of your mistress? I heard, poor lady,
> she wept, and charged you to sleep in a whole skin;

> but young men never know when they're well.
> *Beauf*. Cousin, my love to her cannot make me
> forget my duty to my family. (IV.i.)

Honour (as well as courage) is not only bound to an individual aristocrat's masculinity but to his entire family. Both the "reformed" rake Beaufort and Sir Frederick acknowledge this duty towards their family. Frederick is ironic when he asks if a "zealous lover" like his cousin would go against the wishes of the lady he loves; even a man who loves a woman is understood to value his and his family's honour higher than her wishes and arguments.

Once the duellists and their seconds are on the field, a different sort of battle takes place. A group of armed men, led by "first man" come on stage. This "first man" reveals that his father was killed by Bruce in the battle of Naseby (1645), where Bruce appears to have fought on the king's side. The other men in the group are hired murderers. The "first man" thus shows that he is excluded from the realm of aristocratic masculinity, where he would have been able (and willing) to bring a personal challenge against Bruce for his perceived offence. In practice, as mentioned above, courtiers and other aristocrats hired men to assault their enemies, but such actions were never described as honourable. When they attack Bruce and Lovis, Beaufort and Sir Frederick come on stage and together they drive the ambushers away. Beaufort's cry to arms is telling: "their blood's too good to grace such villains'/ swords" (IV.iv.37-38). Beaufort has come ready to kill Bruce himself; but it has to be done with honour by a man of honour like himself. After the men all affirm their own honour and that of their opponents in the duel (and thus, their membership in the aristocracy) by joining in a battle against Puritan commoners, Beaufort immediately insists on the duel, which Bruce first tries to refuse (however, Beaufort insists that those five men were too meagre prey for his courage). Eventually, Beaufort wins the duel, proving his superior virility, but he lets Bruce live. When they part, their fighting seconds, Lovis and Sir Frederick, are both disgusted at the lack of bloodshed. That is soon amended, though, when Bruce attempts to commit suicide by "falling upon his sword". That action, in Beaufort's eyes, makes Bruce's honour greater than his own, even though Bruce lost the duel (IV.iv.). The value of aristocratic masculinity is established unironically through fighting and bloodshed. In this scene the play establishes a mode of aristocratic masculinity against which the post-revolution and early 18th-century playwrights positioned themselves.

Aphra Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686) is also sympathetic to the practice of duelling as a key to establish aristocratic (hegemonic) masculinity, tying aristocratic masculinity to courage and honour. In the opening soliloquy Belmour, who is on the run following the death of his opponent in a duel, presumably expresses the feelings of many when he mourns

> [...] those pursued like guilty me
> By rigid laws, which put no difference

> 'Twixt fairly killing in my own defense
> And murders bred by drunken arguments,
> Whores, or the mean revenges of a coward.
> (I.i.4-8)

The "rigid laws" refer to the 1680 "Proclamation against Dueling", which "withdrew the possibility of a royal pardon for this capital crime" (Snook's annotation to the *Broadview Anthology* edition of the play). At the end of the scene it is revealed that Belmour was the first transgressor after the law was passed, which distinguishes him as an extraordinary gentleman (I.i.279-280). A few lines later his friend Gayman excuses the marriage of Belmour's fiancée Leticia to another man with "the improbability of/ your ever gaining your pardon for your high duel" (I.i.109-110). The duel, which took place before the story begins, can thus be assumed to have been a just one and the cause too serious to be discussed on stage. The act of having killed a man in his own defence (as it was a duel, it was not self-defence but defence of his honour) marks him as a true gentleman.

The fact that Belmour is still ready to fight at the least provocation is proven shortly before when he mistakes Gayman for Leticia's bridegroom and attacks him. "*They fight a little*" and then recognise each other, upon which Belmour insults Gayman as a "treacherous base /deceiver" (I.i.59-60). Gayman reminds Belmour of some minimal protocol when he tells him "Put up your sword; an honest man/ would say how he's offended before he rashly draws" (I.i.67-69). Gayman does not seem to be seriously insulted by the fact that his old friend has attacked him without any protocol whatsoever. Shortly after this exchange they talk in a quite friendly manner. The two aldermen, Sir Feeble and Sir Cautious, are the antagonists of the play. The constellation drives the message home that while the aristocratic code of honour and duelling is flawed, the new institutions are even worse and the men representing them are at the bottom of the male hierarchy.

Not all playwrights were this sympathetic towards duellists even pre-1688. In Durfey's *The Fond Husband* (1677), it becomes apparent that the notions of a duel and a challenge are not just employed for comical purposes but also as a social commentary. When Ranger insults Rashley, the latter takes him aside and insists on following decorum by not attacking him in front of Emilia in her husband Bubble's house. The cause of their quarrel is not honourable. Ranger has insulted Rashley by alluding to him in a veiled tale to Bubble. On the other hand, Ranger is angry with Rashley for his success with Emilia. As a woman as the object of a duel was not considered honourable (Kiernan 1988 7), Ranger claims that Rashley has offended his honour:

> RANGER: By your ridiculous, fleering behaviour, I guess I was concerned in your last description, an affront that requires instant satisfaction; and believe, sir, you shall not carry it off so clearly as you imagined. Though he is such a fool to be bubbled out of his reason, I am not. Follow me, sir, if you dare. (I.i.239-243)

"Satisfaction" is the language of the duel, but the qualifier "instant" precludes any formal arrangements. Why this affront "requires" instant satisfaction seems to be self-evident for Ranger: it is presumably his honour that requires this immediate action. Ranger also insinuates that he is offended because he believes that Rashley thought Ranger would let the offence slide and that Ranger thus does not value his honour. Rashley shares these premises about honour with Ranger. He immediately reacts to the insult.

By insinuating not only that Rashley is a coward not to follow him as well as that Rashley is hiding behind a woman, Emilia, Ranger implies that not following the challenge would be unmanly (I.i.239-244). The fact that Rashley ignores his lover, Emilia, in this exchange is telling. As a woman, she has no part in the defence of his honour and the establishment of hierarchy among men. While it proves his masculinity to the audience, the fact that he is seriously offended over Ranger's rash challenge also shows that he lacks self-control. Once Bubble, Emilia's husband, finally understands that the two men are about to fight, he tries to prove his masculinity to his wife ("Now observe, chicken" I.i.265) by insulting Ranger: "I say, sir, an impertinent fellow, sir, and deserve to be/ crammed into a powdering-tub" (I.i.266-267). It is not quite clear how much of Ranger's insinuations Bubble understands, but if Ranger had followed his own set of values from his exchange with Rashley, he would have had to challenge Bubble too. However, as it was Bubble's own house, that would have been a breach of etiquette. Ranger leaves and swears that "my revenge/ lies another way" (I.i.269-270). Bubble believes that he has frightened Ranger and feels validated in his masculinity. The audience is aware, however, that his wife is cuckolding him with Rashley and that Bubble himself invited Rashley to live in his house. Bubble might be able to drive Ranger away but he is unable to control his own household. The play, overall, is riddled with scepticism about the concepts of honour and masculinity. The rakes embody hegemonic masculinity, but Durfey's play indicates that its value is low and the foundation it offers for the patriarchal system is shaky in part because of its relationship to violence.

Farquhar's play *The Constant Couple* (1699) makes the same point with a different strategy. Although the protagonist, Sir Harry Wildair, shares many traits with the positive rake-heroes of the 1670s (and Behn's of the 1680s), he also shares traits with the fop (see chapter 3). In the first scene of the play, Vizard, Standard and Wildair talk about the women they love; when Wildair gives the name of his "mistress", Vizard and Standard both realise that they love the same woman as him. While Standard leaves abruptly, Vizard questions Wildair's willingness to fight for the woman he loves. Wildair at first disdains the idea of fighting for a woman; he insists that dancing is the way to contend for a woman: "S'life man, if Ladies were to be gain'd by/ Sword and Pistol only, what the Devil should all the Beaux/ do?" (I.i.243-246). While Wildair acknowledges Standard's skills with sword and pistol, he considers this standard aristocratic manner of settling disputes about women nonsensical. As discussed

above, he was not alone in this assessment, but what makes his opinion highly unusual is that he does not consider a woman dishonourable as the cause of a fight; he does not consider superior fencing skills as a mark of masculinity or worth.

The close connection between the sword and phallus, which was strong in early Restoration comedies (see above), is severed in Wildair's conception of gender. When Vizard presses him further he finally answers:

> *Wildair*: Fight! Let me consider. I love her, that's true – but then I love honest Sir *Harry Wildair* better. The Lady *Lurewell* is divinely charming – right – but then a Thrust ith' [sic] Guts, or a Middlesex Jury, is as ugly as the Devil.
> *Vizard*: Ay, sir Harry, 'twere a dangerous Cast for a Beau Baronet to be tried by a parcel of greasy, grumbling, bartering Boobies, who wou'd hang you purely because you're a Gentleman.
> *Wildair*: Ay, but on t'other hand, I have Money enough to bribe the Rogues with: So upon mature deliberation, I wou'd fight for her. (I.i.249-259)

Despite his earlier claim that women are won by dancing, not fighting, Wildair finally assumes the same position as Beaufort in Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* (1664): he would fight for a woman, but the woman's feelings are not considered. This quote is presented at length because it highlights the aspects of law, class and money/corruption rather plainly. Wildair is concerned about receiving an injury in a way that the rakes in the earlier comedies were not. However, the second option would be to be tried for murder by a jury of middle-class citizens. As a baronet, Wildair would be just underneath the rank of a peer; the peers were tried by the House of Lords, but the privilege did not extend to the wider circles of those belonging to what constituted the loose class of the aristocracy (see chapter 2). Wildair suspects that the (presumably Whiggish) citizens would take any opportunity to condemn somebody from the gentry. They certainly did not believe in the value of duelling. The prospect of being tried by such a jury clearly lowers the honour to be gained by winning a duel. However, when Wildair remembers that he is not only privileged by his rank but also by his wealth and can prevent a trial through bribery, the concern for his safety is dropped. The scene satirises both the aristocracy and the middle class; it shows aristocratic men as violent and the middle class as corrupt. Sir Harry Wildair, for all his effeminacy, is still the better man than a Whiggish, corrupt citizen and establishes hegemony by his superior understanding, his rank and his wealth, rather than displays of courage and honour. Wildair's insistence on his rank was old-fashioned (see chapter 2), but this old-fashioned insistence on the distinctions of rank is proven to be justified in the play, reaffirming the hegemony of the aristocracy.

Later, in Act IV scene I, Colonel Standard encounters Wildair and immediately challenges him to an impromptu fight for an earlier offence. Thus pressed, Wildair evades the duel. Far from considering

skill in personal combat as a virtue of aristocratic men as a class, Wildair recognises that Standard is a good soldier and that fighting is his "Trade". Therefore, it would be madness to "contend with any Man in his/ Profession" (IV.i.24-25). His insistence on Standard's "trade" and "professsion" emphasis that Standard has a lower social standing than Wildair, who is a gentleman of leisure. Wildair has fought a duel with another beau, a French count, and killed him. Neither Wildair nor Lady Lurewell, with whom he flirts when he recounts that story, seem to be disturbed by that fact; Sir Wildair makes fun of the incident "A Duel, Madam, I was his Doctor" – "As most Doctors Do, I kill'd him" (II.v.95-99). While his duel in France was against a man of the same class, his fight against Standard would be against a professional. He does not consider Standard's challenge to be one between equals, between aristocratic men, but considers Standard's rank in the army a "profession", which sets him apart from a wealthy man like himself. When Standard threatens that he would "take very/ unseemly methods if you don't show your self a Gentleman" he answers indignantly that

> I tell you once more, Colonel, that I am a Baronet and have eight thousand Pounds a Year. I can dance, sing, ride, fence understand the languages. Now, I can't conceive how running you through the Body shou'd contribute one Jot more to my Gentility. (IV.i.29-34)

Wildair's conception of gentility has no relation to honour or valour. He can fence; but fencing is transformed into a sport between gentleman of leisure, not a serious affair which reaffirms elite status and elite masculinity. It has been lowered to the same level as dancing and singing. Standard holds on to his more rigid sense of honour and apparently has his sword drawn throughout the whole conversation, as Wildair asks him repeatedly to sheath it. The most remarkable phrase he uses is that "A Man can never hear Reason with a Sword in his/ Hand" (IV.i.52-53). The connection to the phallus is obvious. The drawn sword, like the erect penis, clouds a man's reason and thus undercuts a rational conception of masculinity while symbolising traditional (and still valid) understandings of masculinity.

Farquhar's play is ambiguous concerning notions of honour and demonstrates an acute awareness on his part for the changing conceptions of aristocratic (or gentile) masculinity. Nevertheless, Farquhar is no reformer of manners who makes a clear case against the duel; Standard's character is the most positive one in the play; he is honest, he is sincere and he genuinely tries to do what he thinks is right rather than best for him. Peltonen believes that Standard is "the obvious laughing stock" (Peltonen 2003 185), but just because Wildair laughs at him does not mean that the audience is invited to laugh too. If anything, the play is nostalgic for a world in which honour counted and criticises a world in which Standard as a younger son without money is treated with disrespect. In the regrettably affected world of the play, Wildair teaches him the art of intrigue after Standard agrees not to fight with him. Wildair's modern ways, coupled with his wit, which was an important part of aristocratic masculinity from the

early Restoration onwards, win over Standard's ideals of honour (which includes sincerity towards the woman he loves).

Peltonen claims that Wildair does not understand "the duelling theory at all" because he claims not to see how duelling will add to his character as a gentleman (Peltonen 2003 185). Wildair, as former officer in the army, certainly understands the theory but he also understands that money and rank are more important in the world and that a man of his fortune does not need to prove his courage. Society, he implies, is so corrupt that they will accept him whatever he does. Wildair's final thought on duelling (spoken in a soliloquy), when he is forced to choose between challenging Vizard for making him pursue Angelica (thinking she is a prostitute) or marrying Angelica, modifies his ideas even further: "If I kill/ my Man, the Law hangs me; if I marry my Woman, I shall/ hang my self; – but, Dam it, – Cowards dare fight, I'll marry,/ the more daring Action of the two" (V.i.243-45). The statement that "cowards dare fight" is a remarkable judgement of a custom that was still strong, despite the laws against it. His strong link between the duel and matrimony satirises rakish commonplaces, regard for the duel and disdain for matrimony. He also spells out once more how intimate a duel is: in a duel the opponent is his "man", and the woman he intends to marry is his "woman". On the whole, the play takes a stance against duelling, but for practical, rather than moral reasons. It also undermines the idea of a connection between duelling/fighting and masculinity. Wildair, the main character, acts as if duels are actually fought over women, while men like Standard are aware that women are only the catalyst for establishing a hierarchy between men through the duel (as the men in Etherege's *The Comical* Revenge (1664) do).

Farquhar's later play, *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707), raises similar questions. Archer and Aimwell, two younger brothers who are out of money, use legal difficulties following a duel as their cover story when they travel the countryside to find rich brides. Their claim that Aimwell has wounded a man in a duel and has run off to the country to await the news whether the wounds were fatal or not (III.iii.7-12) (see above – duelling was not illegal, but killing somebody in a duel was considered murder). When Archer, who pretends to be a servant, relates that story to Scrub, a servant in the country, Scrub tells him that in the country duels are often prevented because gentlemen tell their wives, who tell their servants, who tell the tenants, who will intervene. Archer seems to agree that this is a good strategy "[t]o hinder two men from doing what they have no/ mind for" (III.iii.21-22). It is not quite clear in this scene if Archer only considers country gentlemen unwilling to fight duels, and thus emasculated, or if he includes gentlemen from the city in the same category. Neither Aimwell nor his older brother, whose name he took, actually fought a duel after all. The ambiguity of Archer's sentiment echoes the play's ideological ambiguity, which is similar to that in *The Constant Couple*. Helen M. Burke speculates that this helped the plays lasting success (Burke 2001 1278). Farquhar's plays do not offer a solution to the

problematic nature of aristocratic, hegemonic masculinity but they play down the consequences and reassure the audience that, despite the flaws in the current elite, the system can be sustained.

While rakes are validated, the play ridicules fops. The highwayman Gibbet in *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707) gives the landlord two swords for safekeeping: "two silver-hilted swords;/ I took those from fellows that never show any part of/ their swords but the hilts" (II.ii.76-78). Those "fellows" are not necessarily fops, but the jibe is aimed at aristocratic men who display silver-hilted swords as symbol of wealth and valour. However, just as the fop's display of status is all surface, these gentlemen confuse the tool (the sword) with the object (valour). Five years earlier, in Centlivre's *The Beau's Duel* (1702), Sir William, a cowardly fop, remarks that "a Gentleman ought to wear a Sharp for a terror to the Vulgar, and because 'tis the Fashion; but he shou'd never use it but as an Ornament, and part of his Dress" (III.iii.) Consequently, he and his friend Ogle are attacked by two women who pretend to be men. Wildair in *The Constant Couple* (1699) is a mix between a fop and a rake (see chapter 3), while those men Gibbet talks about are clearly fops, who were usually portrayed as cowards and lacking honour.

Ninny and Woodcock in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (1668) are effeminate predecessors of the fop, especially Woodcock. They fight in Act V when they find themselves in the same room of an inn where Emilia has sent both of them on the pretext of meeting them here. When both are determined to stay they "[d]raw, and fight at distance" (V.iii.). Woodcock teases Ninny by asking "Can't you stand a little? Why do you go/ back so, dear heart?", to which Ninny replies that he has the law on his side. If he kills Woodcock, from his position it will be considered self-defence. They then decide to lay down "these dangerous engines of blood, and contend a/ safer way, by the way of cuff and kick" (Ninny). It is unclear how long they would have actually fought on stage, in a doubtlessly comical interlude. After Woodcock's short reply the stage direction reads: "*Enter two Servants, and part them and exeunt*." Both men are cowards at heart, but the code of honour they have learned nudges them towards a fight. Not one, however, in which they actually risked their life; a fistfight was much less honourable, but both Ninny and Woodcock were unable to grasp that concept.

Sparkish in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) is an example of a real coward. In Act II scene I he sends Alithea to a corner to talk with Harcourt in private. Harcourt uses the opportunity to confess his love for Alithea and to slight Sparkish. Alithea, the dutiful fiancée, reports his insults to Sparkish, who claims that it is normal behaviour among wits to show their "parts" (their ready wit, although "parts" of course implies a connection of their wit to their genitalia). Sparkish considers it socially appropriate, after all, to start his conversation with Horner by making fun of his supposed impotence. Alithea then goes into detail and he replies "pshaw" to all insults, even that of being a coward. However, when she reports that Harcourt called him a "senseless drivelling idiot" his reply is

> SPARKISH: How! Did he disparage my parts? Nay, then my honour's concern'd, I can't put up that, sir, by the world. Brother, help me to kill him. [*Aside*] I may draw now, since we have the odds of him. 'Tis a good occasion too, before my mistress – [*Offers to draw*.] (II.i.)

However, Sparkish thinks that wits calling each other "coward" is fair game. He presumably knows that he is a coward but does not think it a very important aspect of a would-be-courtier's identity. Despite this, Sparkish knows that courage and fighting are important aspects of masculinity, as he thinks it a good occasion to fight before his fiancée and thus to show off his prowess. He seems too blind to perceive that his appeal to Pinchwife to help him kill Harcourt devalues his honour, as he does not propose a one-on-one duel but a fight two against one. He also only "offers" to draw; he makes a show of his courage but does not take the first step. In addition, they are inside and even if it did come to a fight, he could be certain that they would be parted.

In Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) Lord Foppington cannot evade a spontaneous swordfight with Loveless. Lord Foppington tries to seduce Loveless's wife Amanda in their home while Loveless is in the same room and Amanda slaps him. Loveless intervenes and the stage directions read "*They draw and fight. The Women run shrieking for help*" (II.ii.412). Loveless wins and Foppington claims the blade has gone "quite thro' the Body" (II.i.310-11). The idea that Loveless stabbed Foppington's body carries clear sexual connotations and establishes Loveless, the rake, as the more potent of the two men. As it turns out, it is only a harmless little wound, a mere scratch, although the surgeon only admits so in an aside (II.ii.453-454) as he hopes to make money out of Lord Foppington. While Foppington is thus willing to fight, his exaggeration of a harmless wound puts him into effeminate territory again. As he leaves, he behaves as though it had been a proper duel and the matter was now at rest: "I hope here's an end on't, for if/ you are satsify'd – I am" (II.ii.475-76). Foppington follows his own mangled version of the unwritten rules regarding honour. He fails to grasp the significance of those customs. In this instance, both the rake and the fop cannot restrain themselves.

Loveless understands that the goal is not access to Amanda's body but an attack on Loveless's masculinity, so he has to fight Foppington to prove himself as the superior man. However, using a swordfight to do so puts Loveless on the same level as Lord Foppington, who, throughout the rest of the play, uses his wound as badge of honour, serving the same purpose as his wig and his clothes as outward badges of his class and masculinity. Foppington later (III.i.) declines his brother's (Young Fashion's) challenge, even after his brother explicitly tells him to "[d]raw, coward" (III.i.119). They are in private and Foppington cannot profit from displaying honour. He informs his brother that he will neither give him the satisfaction of killing him and putting him out of his misery nor be killed so that his brother can inherit: "[…] with the temper of a philasapher [sic], and/ the discretion of a statesman

– I will go to the play with my sword/ in my scabbard" (III.i.126-128). Foppington knows that a statesman needs a more even temper than he has displayed earlier.[25] It is telling that Vanbrugh relied on old codes of masculinity to discredit the fop, but difficult to determine if Vanbrugh's struggle with libertinism and positive masculinity originated from a personal inability to liberate himself from old-fashioned conceptions of (aristocratic) masculinity or if his plays were meant to reflect aristocratic men's inability to move beyond the concepts of honour and valour.

Mary Pix uses another, very direct strategy to emasculate duelling by portraying a proposed duel between two women and ridiculing the fop even more by having him revealed as a servant. In her comedy *The Beau Defeated* (1700) she undermines the notion of the duel as a masculine activity. In Act V the cast-off mistress posing as Lady La Basset comes to challenge Mrs. Rich to a duel. She claims that:

> I'd have thee fight. Dare you set up for quality and
> dare not fight, pitiful citizen? 'Tis for thy honor;
> 'tis modish too, extremely French and agreeable to
> thy own phrase. I'll have thee fight, I say. (V.ii.21-24)

La Basset strips the masculine affirmation from the duel and frames it as a way to establish only class, and not gender. She also connects duelling with foreign customs, putting it outside the world of English masculinity. A little later she adds:

> Thou art the offspring of an alderman, I of quality:
> I can fight, ride, play, equal the men in any virtue
> or vice. (V.ii. 31-33).

Of course, as a former mistress Lady La Basset is not, in fact, of quality. Nevertheless, she manages to ridicule the custom of duelling by indicating that a woman of low birth might be as willing to fight a duel as a highborn gentleman. In truth it is the lowly born mistress who, as in other plays (Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) and Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) for example, see below), flies into an unreasonable passion. Her behaviour mimics that of the men (especially the libertines and ridiculous old men) who act precisely like her. Cibber mocks the code of honour employed by aristocratic men in an even more drastic way by putting words of vengefulness that can only be satisfied by drawing blood into the mouth of a lewd woman. In *Love's Last Shift* (1696) Sir Novelty Fashion's spurned mistress Flareit exclaims "my very/ Soul's on Fire; and nothing but the Villain's/ Blood shall quench it! Devil, have at thee!/ *snatches* Young Worthy's *Sword and runs at him* [Sir Novelty]" (IV.i.124-133). Sir Novelty's reaction is to draw and stand on his guard, encouraging Elder and Younger Worthy to let her come at him. But Young Worthy takes the sword back and holds her. A little later Hillaria chides Sir Novelty for having so little regard for a woman's life, and he responds lightly that he could have disarmed her "in Seconds at the very first Pass" (IV.i.160-61). Sir Novelty knows the appropriate

[25] In Vanbrugh's play, Foppington is remarkable as a fop who is clever.

vocabulary; it remains unclear if he is right in his assumption, but duelling and fencing are framed as feminine or effeminate in the play.

Cibber's uses further strategies in *Love Makes a Man* (1700) to present the duel as unsuited to rational masculinity and modern behaviour. The play contains a scene which seems to be included for the purpose of discouraging duelling. In Lisbon, Carlos, the scholarly protagonist, insults Don Duart, the governor's nephew. After Carlos has gone, Elvira, Don Duart's sister, tries to calm him but fails. When the governor himself appears, Don Duart threatens even him. The governor, certainly an aristocratic man, reproaches his nephew for his rash violence and habitual duelling:

> GOVERNOR. Come, you are too boisterous, sir; and this vain opinion·
> of your courage, taken on your late success in duelling, makes
> you daily shunned by men of civil conversation: For shame, leave
> off these senseless brawls; if you are valiant, as you would be
> thought, turn out your courage to the wars; let your king and
> country be the better for't.
> DON DUART. Yes, so I might be general - Sir, no man living shall
> command me. (III.i.).

The governor implies that duelling is not valiant; it is valiant and courageous to fight wars, but to have private fights is senseless and has no place in "civil" society. While the governor validates the old virtues of valour and prowess in aristocratic men, he also stresses the rather more modern concept of civic duty: wars in the modern age were not personal affairs. The governor places civil conversation as the hallmark of a gentleman; while the duel was portrayed as the mark of a gentleman in plays by sympathetic playwrights, Cibber replaces duelling with civility.

The governor finally decides that Don Duart's status as the governor's nephew will no longer protect him. Don Duart's rash actions have caused the governor to let go of the concept of aristocratic kinship and to implement the law equally for any man. In the new world, "men of almost all conditions" are entitled to complain about the behaviour of the governor's nephew and, as the governor makes plain, they have a right to be heard. Like most women in plays, his sister Elvira tries to placate him. In contrast to older plays, her arguments are positioned as superior to her brother's temper. Don Duart's response is irrational fury:

> DON DUART. Fire! and furies! I am tutored here like a mere school-
> boy! Women shall judge of injuries in honour! – For you, sir – I
> was born free, and will not curb my spirit, nor is it for your
> authority to tempt it: Give me the usage of a man of honour, or
> 'tis not your government shall protect you. *Exit*. (III.i.)

Don Duart fails to realise that his "free birth" and his position as a man of honour stem from the same privilege as the governor's authority. By denying the governor's right to discipline him, Don Duart also erodes his own position: his privilege to act as he pleases stems from his proximity to the governor. If

the governor's authority is worthless, so is his privilege. Later in the play, the duel is directly ridiculed when Don Duart comes across the fop Clodio and seeks a fight with him. Clodio tries to evade the fight at first, but once he is forced to draw his sword because Don Duart attacks him physically, he wins (III.iii.). By showing a fop like Clodio as proficient and victorious in a sword fight, Cibber ridicules the notion of establishing a man's worth by his valour and skill in a duel.

The theme of Charles Johnson's play *The Wife's Relief* (1712) is the unsuitability of duelling for determining social worth and the blurred lines between the duel, a supposedly civil and restrained form of violence, and brawls. The play starts when Valentine is carried across the stage by officers observed by two gentlemen, Volatile and Riot, who do not know what has happened. The officers explain that Horatio (who is not on stage) has "kill'd" Valentine. Volatile comments that they were friends, but the officer remarks that "Wine and Women made them Enemies" (I.i.)

> Riot: Thou art reputed a Fellow of high and mighty Valour; look ye there's your grinning Honour, as Sir John says; what a couple of pretty Fellows are here thrown away for some unseasonable Jest, the refusing a Toast, or perhaps a seeming Negative only expounded into the flat Lie —
> Vol: 'Tis true, good Manners have made us Barbarous; we are civiliz'd into Brutes; an affected Politeness has almost reduc'd us into Hob's first State of Nature.
> Riot: I've known a Nobleman accept a Challenge from a Pickpocket. (I.i.)

Volatile is introduced by his friend as valiant; Volatile's next comment seems to imply that Volatile and Riot (a rake who mistreats his wife) consider duelling a perverted form of violence. (His name suggests that he was a participant in street violence.) A short while later Horatio is led across the stage to the prison. Once they have observed this consequence of duelling, with one of their friends close to death, the other imprisoned, Riot asks Volatile how often he has been a second in "These Honourable conflicts".

> Vol: I have lost some hot Blood on that Account, which my cool Reason tells me I was a fool for; — how often indeed have I been summon'd out of my warm Bed to bleed in the Cause of a Drunkard or Strumpet! I hate the Remembrance; but I know the World — (I.i.)

Despite Volatile's complaint about the fashion of duelling over trivial matters, he has obviously never declined the office of a second. This reflected the common attitude: It was more honourable to be involved in a duel over a trivial matter than to decline acting as a second. Later Valentine and Horatio's mistresses lament the duel. Aurelia (Horatio's lover) complains about the custom of duels in general, talking about "foolish Honour" and "fantastic Pride" and calling the duel a "barbarous custom" but also a set of "magick laws" which the "truly Great and Brave" rashly follow to "purchase Honour with Eternal Shame" (II.i.).

The purchase of honour/valour is one of the main themes in the play; honour can be bought and cannot therefore serve as a marker of class or rank within an internal hierarchy of masculinity. Volatile is offered money by Sir Tristrum Cash if he lets himself be beaten by Sir Tristrum's nephew (Young Cash), in the hope that his nephew will be safer once he has a reputation of being "valiant" (I.i.). While Sir Tristrum is a rich merchant and paid for his nephew's university education. However, his nephew is still not part of the hereditary elite. They do not propose a duel; Sir Tristrum envisions a tavern brawl. For Sir Tristrum the difference between a duel and a brawl is blurred either out of ignorance or out of observation of the realities of aristocratic life. Young Cash's rashness threatens the ploy; he arrives at the tavern "half drunk" with Spitfire. Young Cash declares that he is "martially disposed" and that the port he drank is a "valiant Liquor": "My uncle was a fool to purchase Valour so dear, when I can have/ a full Quart at any time for Twenty Pence" (II.iv.). They fight as arranged in the tavern, and are parted before anyone is injured. Later, Young Cash is involved in a real fight and indeed turns out to be a coward; the stage direction reads "Slur *draws*, Cash *runs to the Extremity of the Stage*". Slur starts beating him and Young Cash does not seem to resist – but when Spitfire reenters, he immediately entreats his friend to kick Slur for him. When Slur and Spitfire both draw and start fighting, Young Cash flees. The entire encounter is comical; although Young Cash and Slur both refer to themselves as "Men of Honour", they are a swindler (Slur) and the scion of a rich merchant family (Young Cash) respectively.

When Sir Fopling in Etherege's *The Man of Mod*e (1676) talks about his desire for some "gallantry with some of our English/ ladies", Dorimant sums up the importance of the duel as well as of seduction: "'Tis a thing no less necessary to confirm the/ reputation of your wit than a duel will be to satisfy/ the Town of your courage" (II.ii.242-246). Sir Fopling, not surprisingly, skirts the allusion to a duel. In Southerne's play *Sir Anthony Love* (1690), the eponymous protagonist Sir Anthony Love (who is actually Lucy, a woman) comes to the same conclusion. She tells her/his governor Waitwell in the first scene that she "would be feared as well as loved: as/ famous for my action with the men, as for my/ passion for the women" (I.i. 16-18). Sir Anthony/Lucy follows it up with remarking that it is "only the fashion of the world" that allows men to wear a sword, claiming that women are as capable as men with a sword. Sir Anthony/Lucy's constant practice in fencing has made her as good and courageous as the men, she claims (I.i.22-27). As discussed in chapter 2, the light rapier that was brought to England in the Renaissance made skill more important than strength; Southerne's play mocks both the pursuit of women and duelling/quarrelling as activities that defined an aristocratic man's masculinity and status by claiming that it was easy for a woman to imitate them and become part of the exclusive circle of men.

Interpersonal violence and rioting

Historically speaking, aristocratic men were involved in all forms of violence, though they were often punished less severely than men of a lower rank. The most obvious example during the Restoration is the 7th Earl of Pembroke, who was by all accounts a mass murderer. The first time he was caught, he was granted the privilege of the peerage, which could only be granted once, and released. On the second occasion, he could not claim the privilege again, but after 24 peers petitioned Charles II to release him he was granted a royal pardon. He might also have murdered Sir Edmund Godfrey, whose death sparked anti-Catholic sentiments and ultimately the Popish plot. It was rumoured that it was men in Pembroke's employ that cudgelled Dryden in 1679 (ONB). A few years earlier Sedley, one of the Court Wits, had an actor cudgelled in the park for imitating Sedley's clothes (Barker Benfield 1992 47). Sedley did not face serious consequences either. The peers and the king seem to have made sure that those of the peerage or connected to them were treated leniently. Young aristocratic men in particular had a long tradition of indulging in unruly, even violent behaviour and wreaking havoc at night (see Karras 2003). Shepard cites one remarkable event in 1593 in which a group of young men from Oxford (two of whom were later to become bishops) broke into a tavern and rang church bells, insulting and attacking anyone who tried to stand against them. Shepard points out that despite this obvious resistance against patriarchal order, those disruptions tended to be tolerated in the Renaissance (Shepard 2003 94).

The tradition continued after the Restoration. Rochester, a man considered a stereotypical libertine by his contemporaries, and the playwright Etherege were involved in an incident similar to that described by Shepard in Epsom in 1676 (the same year Etherege wrote *The Man of Mode*). Together with a group of friends, they drunkenly roamed the streets and engaged in petty acts of violence such as "tossing some fiddlers in a blanket for refusing to play". They were tricked by a barber, who promised to show them the house of the "handsomest woman in Epsom" and led them to the constable instead (letter by Charles Hatton, quoted by Greene 1974 106). Enraged by the deception or possibly still believing that there were prostitutes in the house, they broke down the constable's door. When the watch arrived to stop them, Etherege managed to appease them but one of Rochester's friends was killed in the confusion when he tried to stop Rochester from attacking the watch. Rochester reputedly ran away into hiding and absconded; for a while, it was rumoured that he would be put on trial but like most aristocratic men, he never was. By the time he returned to court, he had been forgiven (Greene 1974 106).

While the blame was officially put on the watchmen, Rochester's reputation suffered. Despite his actions as a volunteer in the army at Bergen in 1665, he could never shake off the reputation of being

a coward (Johnson 2004 250). The fact that he developed this reputation for cowardice despite the courage he displayed in the army (Greene 1974 58) is one indication that personal combat was of higher social value. The aftermath of this event demonstrates notions of aristocratic masculinity that may seem unfamiliar today: the fact that he attacked watchmen while he was drunk after he tried to break into a house to look for prostitutes would not have been detrimental to his honour and reputation. However, his status as an aristocratic man was put in question by his alleged cowardice and his failure to revenge his friend's death against official representatives of the law who were, of course, of much lower social rank than he was (Johnson 2004 250). Similar incidents seemed to remain common. In 1682 Thomas Wharton, the 1st Marquis of Wharton, for example, broke into a church in Great Barrington, Gloucestershire, and relieved himself on the communion table and the pulpit (see also chapter 3).

The Mohock scare of 1712, when a group of elite male rakes apparently terrorised London at night, is the most famous incident involving street violence and young aristocratic men. However, it is not clear what exactly happened and how real the threat of the Mohocks was. Modern scholarship considers the story to have been a media scare rather than an indication of a gang that was more dangerous than those of other years. It seems clear that the streets of London were not safe at night and that young men from noble families (many of whom studied in the Temple) were involved in street crimes such as brawling and physical attacks (see Statt 1995 and Hurl-Eamon 2005). Hurl-Eamon notes that while historians have found it difficult to analyse the impact of the Mohocks statistically, "a markedly greater number of gentlemen were prosecuted for assaults after 1712 than before" (Hurl-Eamon 2005 33). The lists of Mohock names which circulated, for example in the pamphlet "A True List of Names of the Mohocks [...] who were Apprehended and Taken on Monday Night, Tuesday and this Morning", included titled gentry (the heirs of peers, among them Lord Hinchingbrooke, heir to Lord Sandwich). Contrary to the claims in the sensational lists published, listing 70 men, there were not 70 arrests. Hurl-Eamon notes that "due to the very possibility that these descriptions were invented, they are valuable to historians as evidence of wider social anxieties surrounding certain upper-class youth activities [....]. Contemporaries were very aware of the Mohocks' identity with the aristocracy, and that made them appear more dangerous" (Hurl-Eamon 42). Those texts produced by (or producing) the Mohock resulted from the same anxieties citizens felt about the misdemeanours of the aristocratic elite which were expressed in comedies at the time, particularly those of Charles Johnson. The Mohock scare itself was turned into a play by John Gay in the same year (1712), *The Mohocks,* described as "a Tragi-Comical Farce". The play, Gay's first, was printed but not performed (Lewis 1968 790), possibly because it was published just a month after the Mohocks were "hot news" (Fuller 1983 3).

Such violent gangs had a long tradition. In 1923 Thornton S. Graves claimed in an article on "Some Pre-Mohock Clansmen" that "there is an abundance of evidence to show that organized rowdies very similar to those described by Swift and Steele had been operating in England for at least three generations" (Graves 1923 395). There was the Elizabethan "nuisance", the "Roaring Boy" who was mentioned in early drama and in 1598 a group called "the damned Crewe" was mentioned in a sermon (Graves 1923 396). As early as 1613 a poet, John Stephens wrote:

> Honest is now a metamorphis'd name:
> He that can sweare, blaspheme, be riotous
> Roare till the mid-night eccho, or beginne
> Some un-appeased fray, who dares commence
> A drunken skrimish in a bawdy-house,
> Fight for his hackney whore, and hazard all,
> In honour of his damn'd associates
> […]
> […] ô hees the man
> Reputed sociable in our age: ô hee
> Is reckon'd for the honest gentleman.
> (Quoted by Graves 1923 398)

Sources such as these show that street violence had been considered common or at least not unusual among men of all classes since at least the Elizabethan times. As with the Mohock scare, it is difficult to assess how much truth there was in these accusations, but neither the behaviour of gentlemen nor the attacks against them was a new phenomenon after the Restoration.

These Elizabethan groups remained part of the public consciousness. They were mentioned in 1691 in Thomas Shadwell's *The Scowrers*, and in 1693 Southerne in *The Maid's Last Prayer* has a character say: "I remember your Dammee-Boyes, your Swashes,/ Your Tuquoques and your Titire-Tues" (II.ii.). The speaker is an old man and talks about his youth. It is not clear who he means by Dammee Boys, but while the references serve to exaggerate his age, it would not work if the audience had forgotten the names of those groups. The Damned Boys are also addressed in the epilogue of Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), but it was the name of a group from 1598 (see above). The Titire-Tues must be the Renaissance group, as there are no hints of such a group after the Restoration. The most important group after the Restoration were the Hectors. The Hectors were recruited from the ranks of ex-soldiers after the Civil War, but the word "hector" soon became synonymous with "bully" (the first recorded use in the OED is from 1661). John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, calls his penis "a rude roaring hector in the streets" in his poem "The Imperfect Enjoyment" (54). While the reference is ironic, the appellation cements the connection made between virility and violence. Rochester himself was called "Ye Court Hector" and seems to have led a riotous group called the "Ballers" (Barker Benfield 1992 47-50).

Rioting was part of libertinism, a threat to stability by those who were supposed to protect it. Such groups also had political undercurrents. Most of the Mohocks were affiliated with the Whigs and the debate surrounding the events had a partisan tone (Statt 181-183). The Titire-Tues allegedly had a "prince" called "Ottoman" (Graves 1923 400) and the Mohocks were similarly said to have an "emperor" and to use a "Turkish Crest" (Statt 1995 191). The activities of such gangs of the future elite were thus connoted as foreign and associated with a style of absolutism that had never been accepted in England. However, it is unlikely that the majority of young rioters was overly concerned with political statements or seriously sought to overthrow the system that guaranteed their privileges. It seemed to have been a tacit initiation into the world of elite manhood to band together as young men to get drunk and riot, upsetting and harassing those of the lower classes to establish a crude dominance.

It is not surprising that, in contemporary usage, "rake" was often synonymous with "hector" – there was always a level of implied violence. In Richard Ames's poem from 1693 called "The Rake: or, The Libertine's Religion", the speaker encourages his friend to "do what never yet was done/ By *antient Hector*, or by *Modern Rake*/ Some daring Action, which may be recorded to Posterity" (V.5-6). He lists as "low *Mechanick Actions*, most unfit/ for US, the Sons of *Fancy, Sense and Wit*" (V.15) the "*Frightning of Cullies*, and *Bombasting Whores*,/ *Wringing off Knockers*, and from *Posts and Doors*/ *Rubbing out Milk-Maids*, and some other *Scores*,/ *Scowring the Watch*, or *Roaring in the Streets*,/ *Lamp-blacking Signs*, with divers other Feats" (V.9-13). After that, he again pressures his companions to get drunk in order for the God of Wine to inspire them to do something outrageous. While Barker-Benfield believes that the speaker wishes to distinguish himself from those "less elevated libertines" (Barker-Benfield 1992 95), he rather seems to be confessing to all of those crimes. The poem indicates that those crimes enjoyed no high regard and were acts of violence that were not exclusively aristocratic. However, young aristocrats participated in these disruptive activities. Poems such as this show that it was increasingly discussed as a problem that needed to be remedied and that the indulgent attitude that Elizabethan students were treated with started to be replaced by the notion that these activities needed to be curbed.

While spontaneous gangs of rakes were sometimes formed, there is also strong evidence that some of them were semi-organised. Such gangs were often put in close connection to clubs (Statt 1995 191). According to Lord, a number of clubs he groups as "hell-fire clubs" were frequented by young men of the leisured class. Lord claims that young men of the lower classes would have wreaked havoc without this kind of organisation (Lord 2008 xxii). Lord (and Statt) seem to be too uncritical of contemporary accounts of clubs. It has become a cliché that 18th-century men were particularly fond of clubs. This has been exposed as an exaggeration (see Lund 2002), but with their peculiar localisation between the private and the public sphere, clubs were indeed popular among most men in the 18th century,

especially if the definition of "club" is broadened. The newly formed coffee-house provided a space away from home and the raucous tavern and it was less public than Parliament or the stock exchange. Soon, certain coffee-houses began to be frequented by specific groups (Lord 2008 xxiii). From there it was a short step to the formation of a more formal club. While, as mentioned above, men of this time are considered to have been fond of clubs, more recent studies have pointed out that voluntary associations were met with suspicion (Lund 2002 391). Tories suspected coffee-houses early on of being the places where Whig conspirators met (Lund 2002 393). The Tories were joined by High Church and Anglican Royalist pamphleteers. In their rhetoric the clubs had been transformed into diabolical associations, where atheists, libertines and republicans met. Atheism, a popular attribute of the libertine, was conflated with political subversion (Lund 2002 393, see also chapter 3). None of the rakes in the early 18th-century comedies discussed here even hint at being a member of a formal club. Part of the reason is probably that by now virtually all playwrights were Whigs but generally in favour of the Reformation of Manners. They were unlikely to paint their own Whig tradition of clubs in the same light their Tory enemies did. In Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683) the Podesta's son Cruffy attends meetings of a club of young Whigs, strongly encouraged by his father. The play suggests that clubs are a place that fosters republican politics. Cruffy's club was, from what the audience can glean, not a gang wrecking havoc on the streets, but rather a poetry club, but it seems nearly as dangerous.

Even if rakes did not necessarily engage in such blatantly violent and disruptive behaviour, men in the comedies often have a remarkably short temper; challenges, impromptu fights and casual violence are part of nearly every play. Such incidents are portrayed as natural expression of strong feelings. At the beginning of the Restoration period, even positive characters would have outbursts of violence, while later plays placed more emphasis on self-control as a virtue (see also chapter 5 on relationships and the unruly phallus). Playwrights in the late 17th century (until roughly the first decade of the 18th century) took it for granted that men would have no full control over their temper. It was the reformers of manners, among them Steele, who challenged this idea and who introduced the ideal of a rational man in control of his own emotions (see Foyster 1999a and 1999b, Shoemaker 1999 and 2001, Cowan 2001, Carter 2001 and McKeon 2005). The reformers of manners regarded male public spaces as problematic. To them, "[t]he Royal Society, the College of Physicians, the universities, clubs, coffeehouses, fashionable taverns, and playhouses – a new 'cultural infrastructure' seemed to be fostering infidelity and the pursuit of pleasure" (Barker-Benfield 1992 38). It was explicitly worrisome to them that men who engaged in the most problematic activities held important positions in politics. "By day the club members [of the hellfire club or other rake clubs] might be courtiers, Members of Parliament and respectable members of the community. By night, they broke social rules to experience forbidden pleasure" (Lord 2008 xxv).

As discussed above, such transgressions were traditionally tacitly accepted and considered to be part of a youth culture (see also Karras 2003 67-108 on men at university in the middle ages), perhaps as a clumsy way of establishing power over lower classes. After the Restoration and particularly after the Glorious Revolution, citizens were increasingly making their voice against such practices heard and this attitude was mirrored in comedies. The monarchs and the peers protected those at the top of society, but comedies are among the texts which record the frustration middle-class citizens felt. Charles Johnson's play *The Masquerade* (1719), for example, reflects these early 18th-century attitudes of anxiety towards an idle and violent aristocracy, and Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686) and Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699) both attack the corruption of the legal system, although while Behn validates the duel, Farquhar dismisses it as a tool to establish hegemony or justice.

Shadwell's adaption of the Don Juan story, *The Libertine* (1675) is more violent than a comedy; Shadwell's satire on libertinism focuses more on violence than on sexual deviance. Extreme physical violence is an integral part of Don John's character. The play begins with Don John discussing libertine philosophy with his friends Don Antonio and Don Lopez. They scorn religion ("our prosp'rous pleasures, which dull fools call sins," I.i.2) and consider conscience as made up of "dark and horrid thoughts/ raised from the fumes of a distempered spleen" (I.i.8-9), a crude attempt to use science as a justification or licence. Don Lopez then thanks his friend Don John for having "dispelled the fumes which once clouded our brains" (I.i.20-21) and Don Antonio thanks him for the recovery of "all the liberty of nature" (I.i.26). Don John replies that "Nature gave us our senses, which we please,/ nor does our reason war against our sense./ By nature's order, sense should guide our reason,/ since to the mind all objects sense conveys" (I.i.28-31). In their discourse, neo-Epicurean strands of thought as well as Enlightenment ideas are apparent. Sexual licence is only one of their methods to gain their liberty; Jacomo, Don John's servant, reminds Don Lopez that he cut his elder brother's throat and Don John had his father killed (presumably, he hired an assassin). Don John calmly replies that "it was something and a good thing too, sirrah. His whole/ design was to debar me of my pleasures. He kept his purse from me" (I.i.81-83). While *The Libertine* is a farce, Shadwell demonstrates how the atheistic philosophy of the Court Wits could be used to justify extreme violence and anarchy. Lady Woodvill in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) has only heard rumours about Dorimant, the arch-rake, but those indicate that "He is the/ prince of all the devils in the Town – delights in/ nothing but in rapes and riots" (III.iii.119-121). "Prince of all the devils" alludes both to Satan and to gangs such as the Titire-Tues whose leaders had outragous titles (see above). While Lady Woodvill is portrayed as a ridiculous prudish lady, the accusation of Dorimant participating in "rapes and riots" is never refuted by him. The play itself is remarkable for its lack of violence; it is hardly even alluded to. But Lady Woodvill reminds

the audience that a darker side is lurking underneath the polished form of libertinism that is shown on stage.

In Shadwell's later comedy *The Squire of Alsatia*, which was staged in 1688, the protagonist Belfond Junior is considered a rake by his father and other characters, but not directly linked to violence. However, his brother, Belfond senior, who has arrived from the country, is immediately taken in by his cousin and other shady figures in "Alsatia". "Alsatia" was the name for an area of Whitefriars where debtors could not be arrested and which according to this play was a lawless area (Gayman in Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1685) also lives there to escape his debtors and goes out in disguise). Here Belfond senior learns to riot on the street and break windows as part of what he considers the typical joys of life in town. Those actions place him outside the polite company of gentlemen, however; he is admired for his actions by the mob on the streets, but by not his social equals. His brother forcefully removes him from this undesirable company and at the end of the play there is some hint that the coarse young country gentleman might finally learn how to behave like a true gentleman by close proximity to his younger brother, who is much better suited to perform the role. As in *The Libertine*, Shadwell affirms the new construction of fraternal patriarchy as the basis for power and hegemony, rather than the old patriarchy, which privileged age. Only young, strong, well-educated men could uphold and restore social order, as Belfond junior proves in the small area of Alsatia.

Not surprisingly, Shadwell was also the playwright to immortalise a violent gang of rakes, the Scowrers, who were active in the 1680s and 1690s. Shadwell was evidently concerned with the level of violence young aristocrats engaged in. *The Scowrers* (1691) was his last comedy and the starkest warning against the violent tendencies of the aristocracy. In *The Scowrers* the rioters are proud of their accomplishments and celebrate them as deeds of honour and nobility:

> Tope: My dear Knight, my dear Will Rant, thou art the Prince of
> Drunkards and of Scowrers; thou art a noble Scavenger, and every
> night thou clearest the streets of scoundrel Bullies, and of idle Rascals,
> and of all Ale-tofts and sops in Brandy.
> Wildfire: And the Taverns of Trades-men and of sober Rogues of business,
> who should be at their cheating callings, or watching of their Wives at
> home. (I.i.)[26]

Tope's elevation of Will Rant to a "prince" and a "noble Scavenger" who exacts his own twisted form of justice is both comical and political; Wildfire and Tope portray themselves as soldiers in a war of the classes. This is further underlined when Tope, who is an old man, reminisces about the good old rioting times:

> Puh, this is nothing; why I knew the Hectors, and before them

[26] The edition used has no line numbers.

> the *Muns* and the *Titire Tu's*; they were brave fellows indeed; and in those days a Man could not go from the *Rose Tavern* to the *Piazza* once, but he must venture his Life twice. (I.i.)

The old groups are also cast in the light of soldiers, who were braver than the Scowrers. Tope's young friend Sir William mocks him by saying "Yes, and the Wine was better, and the Women handsomer;/ you old fellows are always magnifying the days of your youth". Mockery of old people's nostalgia is a staple in Restoration comedy, of course; here Shadwell uses the trope not only to make fun of old people but also to emphasise that the problem of street violence, including that of aristocratic men, was systemic and deep-rooted. There is no glorious past to revisit and the present looks bleak too. The way in which the rioters fashion themselves as noble and brave warriors is often genuinely funny, but the high level of violence was always a sinister undertone to his comedies, one that distinguishes him from most of his contemporaries.

Other examples of rakish rioting in comedies can be found from the early Restoration to the mid-eighteenth century. In Etherege's play *The Comical Revenge* (1664) Sir Frederick Frollick appears on stage after a night of trouble-making. His "adventure" is described in more detail in the play, so it will be used here as an example for what we might assume other characters mean in later plays when they talk about their "adventures". Sir Frederick's servant (the ridiculous Frenchman Dufoy) shows him his head injury, for which Sir Frederick gives him money but bids him remain silent. He then directs Dufoy to pay off all those involved in his wild night, who, according to Dufoy, besieged the house. Sir Frederick muses that "I am of the opinion that drunkenness is not so damnable/ a sin to me as 'tis to many; sorrow and repentance/ are sure to be my first work the next morning" (I.ii.). He asks Dufoy, however, to send up the chambermaid, who is among those besieging the house. The chambermaid, Jenny, then lets us know what happened the night before. Jenny informs him that "[a] civil gentleman will come to a lady's/ lodging at two o'clock in the morning, and knock as if it were upon life and death". When Jenny's mistress refused to open the door, he and his companions "hollered like madmen" and shouted "Whore". The woman in question is Mrs. Grace, the kept mistress of the unsavoury Wheedle. Jenny's indignation and her insistence on their destroyed reputation among the neighbours is thus to some extent ironic. The audience might already guess as much. Sir Frederick plays the incident down and tries to seduce Jenny while she is complaining. Apparently, he has already seduced her at some point and his cousin Beaufort, when he enters, recognises her too. It is important to note here that Etherege made sure to let the audience know that Sir Frederick did not molest sexually innocent women by explicitely pointing out that the women he had harassed were not innocent.

When Beaufort asks what happened, Sir Frederick tries to silence Jenny, but after he tells Beaufort a short version of what Jenny has told him, she angrily adds:

> These were not all your heroic actions.
> *Enter Dufoy.*
> Pray tell the consequence, how you marched bravely
> at the rear of an army of linkboys; upon the sudden,
> how you gave defiance, and then waged a bloody war
> with the constable; and having vanquished that
> dreadful enemy, how you committed a general mas-
> sacre on the glass-windows. Are not these most
> honourable achievements, such as will be registered
> to your eternal fame by the most learned historians of Hicks's Hall.
> (I.ii.)

Although the play was written 27 years before Shadwell's *The Scowrers*, Jenny's sarcasm is reminiscent of Shadwell's play. *The Comical Revenge* was one of the earliest Restoration comedies, staged in 1664, and the way in which men like Sir Frederick were lacking in comparison to their noble ancestors is spelled out rather plainly by Jenny. It also puts Frederick in opposition to Bruce, the rival of Frederick's cousin Beaufort, whose duel was discussed in the above section. Bruce is an officer who has actively fought against Cromwell. Frederick, on the other hand, fights against constables and massacres glass-windows instead of Puritans. However, as we know from incidents such as the one in Epsom (see above), Etherege himself took part in such events and the sarcasm here is gentler; Jenny is a furious servant girl, not an equal. Cibber addresses violent rakes in his epilogue to *Love's Last Shift* (1696) as "you whose sole Religion's Drinking,/ Whoring, Roaring, without the Pain of Thinking" (9-10). The rakish members of the audience, Cibber supposed, would not appreciate "an honest rake" foregoing the pleasures of whoring for a "dull chaste wife". Cibber was thus very aware that many rakes were not as reformable as his stage rake, Loveless. On the other hand, railing the audience was part of the epilogue's convention (see chapter 2 and 3).

In Charles Johnson's play *The Masquerade* (1719), Smart, the foppish and witless rake, boasts of his "Night of Pleasure" which consisted in him and his friends being "most prodigiously Frolicksome and Wicked; and all that". Among his friends is "that most ingenious Peer, my Lord/ *Spancounter*, he who was the first Inventor of that elegant/ Amusement of breaking Sash Windows with Copper Half-Pence" (I.i.). The audience is certainly invited to disagree with the label "elegant" for an act of vandalism. Lord Spancounter is not a character in the play; presenting a vandalising peer directly on stage might have been unwise. Yet it is noteworthy that Johnson attributes this particular amusement to the invention of a peer. Caelia, Smart's kept mistress, comments that "How ingeniously do our/ Quality divert themselves in little London: They game/ with Thieves, fornicate with Pick-Pockets, and get drunk/ with Poison" (I.i.). In this world the very pinnacle of society, the aristocracy, merges with the very bottom of society, petty criminals, through acts of petty violence, petty crime and of course sexual intercourse. The implication is that they are not men fit to rule the country nor are they at the top of the internal

male hegemony. In his earlier play *The Generous Husban*d (1711) violence is feminised by crossdressing. Fictitia and her maid Viola dress as men so that Fictitia can get closer to the man she loves, Veramant. However, Viola tells her mistress that she "shall never endure Petticoats again/ S'life, after I have hector'd and bounc'd, and by your/ Ladyship's example, bully'd half the young Milksops in the town" (II.i.). Violence is again something connected to the lower class here. While "milksop" indicates an effeminate man, the act of using violence to establish an internal hierarchy among men is ridiculed, because a woman like Viola can easily establish herself as dominant in the system.

As part of a convoluted intrigue in *The Constant Couple* by George Farquhar (1699), Lady Lurewell gets Sir Harry Wildair to take a cudgel and beat Smuggler, who also holds the rank of Alderman, in her house. The humour in this scene is derived from the politeness of Sir Harry's manner, even while he is beating the older man with a cudgel, insisting that he is "jesting". When Smuggler finally cries "Murder, Felony, Manslaughter", Sir Wildair replies "Sir, I beg you ten thousand Pardons; but I am/ absolutely compell'd to't upon my Honour, Sir; nothing can/ be more averse to my Inclinations, than to jest with my/honest, dear, loving, obliging Friend, the Alderman" (II.V. 46-50). (At the end of the Play, Smuggler forgives Sir Harry because Sir Harry condemns his nephew Vizard, who had betrayed all of them).

Conclusion

Violence was obviously widespread and found its way into comedies often to criticize predominant aristocratic masculine values; on the other hand, violence against fops (and other undesirable characters) was also used to elicit laughter in the same way slapstick is still used today. It has political connotations, but simple ones: a ridiculous character is ridiculed, but the conclusion cannot be that such violence would be acceptable off stage; positive male characters might humiliate and beat the fop on stage on stage but that does not necessarily mean that the playwrights condoned such violence outside the context of a play. Depending on the playwright, violence is tolerated as a part of natural masculine passion or presented as a social problem; it is noteworthy, however, that outbursts of violence are never portrayed as positive and that men with a good control over their temper are never portrayed as effeminate. Farquhar makes fun of noblemen's propensity for violence in *The Constant Couple* (1699). A woman accuses Clincher of having murdered and robbed her husband; she is about to set the mob upon him, but the Constable stops them by saying: "Murder and Robbery! Then he must be a Gentle-/man. Hands off there, he must not be abus'd" (IV.i.86-88). Clincher is not a gentleman but a citizen. The constable's assumption parodies the idea that gentlemen channelled their violence into controlled duelling.

Shoemaker (1999) and Foyster (1999a and b) argue based on court records that there was an actual decline in masculine violence in London in the Restoration and the mid-18th century. How much of this

decline was due to the campaign for the Reformation of Manners is difficult to assess and beyond the scope of this work. What can be said is that while the protagonists of comedies became less violent, the world of London was still portrayed as violent and dangerous. Shepard argues that

> the boldest resistance to patriarchal concepts of order was performed by young men, many of whom espoused potent inversions of normative meanings of manhood. Youthful rituals of misrule indulged routine aspects of male sociability to excess […] and subverted patriarchal imperatives of order, thrift and self-control. In their bids for manhood, young men embraced precisely the kinds of behaviour – violent disruption, excessive drinking, illicit sex – condemned by moralists as unmanly, effeminate and beast-like (Shepard 2005 94).

To a certain extent violent, disruptive behaviour was part of youth culture. But the expression of dominance and masculinity through violence was also riddled with anxiety. The duel preserved class distinctions; petty violence on the other brought the aristocratic rake into close contact with the lowest classes. It was important for a man to show courage; at the same time, however, he had to demonstrate his ability to show restraint (Peltonen 2003 181). The rakes often failed in the latter while fops were cowards who only tried to have a reputation for violence or were self-aware enough to appropriate anti-duelling rhetoric.

Violence and virility were closely linked but an increasing trend towards self-control and the curbing of violence (Foyster 1999a) not only disturbed the connection between violence and masculinity but also necessitated a rethinking of the connection between the phallus and the sword, sexuality, aggression and masculinity. A young man's vigour in any bodily exertion, but particularly in fighting, was linked to his virility. In Howard's *The Committee* (1662) Ruth tells Colonel Careless that "You care not who you are wicked with; methinks/ a prison should tame you". His answer connects his virility with violence: "Why, d'you think a prison takes away blood and/fight?" (V.ii.49-52). The sentiment uttered in one of the earliest comedies of the Restoration is still echoed in later comedies, such as Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* from 1716 – the aristocratic gentleman is not fazed by prison.

Some scholars try to separate the witty libertine from the violent rake or do not even mention the rake's violent side at all. Chernaik, Weber and Turner focus on the rake's wit and sexuality. Mackie, on the other hand, analyses rakes alongside highwaymen and pirates as a type of criminal. Statt follows Samuel Johnson's definition of rakes (see chapter 3) and distinguishes rakes and libertines not, as it is done here, as a figure on stage and a term for the philosophy or lifestyle of historical figures, but defines "rakery" as "the aggressive, the violent, the destructive quality of libertinism, and perhaps by inference the element of violence in aristocratic cultural norms. The rake may be taken to represent the dark side of the libertine archetype, typically bereft of the wit, refinement, style and sense to which the libertine could at least putatively lay claim" (Statt 1995 181). However, there can be no clear distinction between

the witty and refined libertine and the violent rake (or "debauch"), either on or off stage. The wittiness was always entwined with aggression; as Statt recognises, there was a prominent element of violence in aristocratic cultural norms as evidenced by the groups rioting on the street. The forcefulness of the rake, whether expressed in sexual mastery or violence, was one of his hallmarks. In positive terms, those characteristics signified his vitality, which naturally justified his dominance. The rake expressed this dominance on stage mainly through his wit. He used his wit to make sexual conquests (see chapter 5), but where wit failed he could assert his physical dominance. The fop, on the other hand, was never a truly violent character. Fops were, as a rule, too cowardly. Whether a playwright approved of duelling or not, cowardice was always framed as unmanly, and thus violence on stage, whether in the form of casual violence towards the fop or exposing his cowardice when faced with a challenge, always served to establish internal hegemony between men and placed the effeminate fops at the bottom.

While violent transgressions were one way of asserting power, such excesses were often fuelled by alcohol. Most of these men started drinking in the morning, they were naturally very drunk by night and their increased lack of restraint was as likely to stem from alcohol as from the lack of light. Owen points out that in many comedies, the rakes are drunk during their more outrageous deeds such as the rape scene in Behn's *The Rover* (1676) (Owen 2004a 130-131). In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, aristocratic men were not likely to spend their leisure time at home. The ale-house separated husbands from wives and eroded class-barriers – aristocratic libertines and low-class "mechanics" could meet there and displayed the same behaviour (Barker-Benfield 1992 66). Owen claims that the playwrights' treatment of drink "illuminated" matters of sexual politics and masculinity. Willmore, in Behn's *The Rover* (1677) for example, craves drink as much as women. During the rape scene (discussed in chapter 5) the men are all drunk: "Drunk, the rake becomes predator" (Owen 2004 130). However, the scene also reveals Behn's ambiguity as "there is no doubt that the drunkenness makes the rape scene comic" (Owen 2004 131). Willmore's drink of choice is wine – a beverage that was not produced in England and therefore foreign. Keblusek explores the connections between the royalist cause and the consumption of wine, a drink that distinguished the cavalier from the commoner (Keblusek 2004 56). Beer, in royalist writings, was connected with Roundheads pre-Restoration; drinking wine became an act of resistance (Keblusek 2004 57). In comedies, rakes also never drink anything but wine, of which, however, they drink copious amounts, and while the choice of drink has political implications, it also indicates yet another excess rakes indulged in and one that brought their darker tendencies to the foreground.

07: Conclusion: Taming the Beast

Domesticity

Comedies were part of social and political discourses rather than just commentaries on it and many were particulary engaged with discourses surrounding hegemonic masculinity. One of their main tools or weapons in the reformulation of masculinity was the emerging discourse of domesticity, which was supposed to tame the licentious, uncurbed and violent strains of masculinity. In comedies, playwrights explored and increasingly criticised aristocratic constructions of masculinity by using the stock types of the rake and the fop. A closer analysis of the rake and the fop, following their evolution into the 18th century and paying attention to the changes these types underwent, demonstrates that the rake and the fop in their excesses were markers of a seismic shift in patriarchy which necessitated a shift in hegemonic masculinity, which the aristocratic men at the top of society were unwilling to make. The rake and the fop were expressions of the struggle with the shift from paternal to fraternal patriarchy. Part of the humour in later comedies, especially those after 1688, stems from the rake and the fop's inability to grasp the shift in patriarchy, which took hegemony away from them and made politeness and restraint a key attribute of hegemonic masculinity. Rakes such as Loveless in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) and Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), Wildair in Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (1699) and even the cullies in *The Gentleman Cully* (anonymous, 1702) still believe they are on top of the internal masculine hierarchy. On the other hand, the notion of libertinism as hegemonic masculinity lingered in some plays after 1688; while Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* (1696), for example, is certainly the most passive of the male characters, his friend Young Worthy, who is in charge of both plots, considers himself to be a rake as well. And in 1700 Congreve's rake Mirabell reigns supreme in *The Way of the World*.

The previous chapters have demonstrated how, in the deceivingly light-hearted context of comedies, anxieties about patriarchy, about the state of masculinity and their meaning for national stability were formulated. To round off the observations about rakes, fops and hegemonic masculinity, this chapter aims to describe and analyse the tools which playwrights employed to present alternatives to libertinism as hegemonic masculinity. Those tools were the emerging ideology of domesticity, the reformation trope and politeness (see also chapter 4 on the fop). The majority of playwrights propagated the evolution of fraternal patriarchy, but the political system with the peers at the top remained unchanged, despite an increasing emphasis on "worth" rather than "birth". This led to the need to reformulate and reaffirm the suitability of aristocratic men as leaders and as members of an elite whose masculinity was hegemonic; their identity as men had to justify not only their position in

society but also the subordination of women to men. The rake claimed this role for himself, but even early Restoration comedies such as Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671) and Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* (1664), which were positive towards their rake figures, indicated the weaknesses of libertinism. Effeminacy, as embodied by the fop, threatened the entire patriarchal order because fops occupied a social space meant for hegemonic masculinity. Comedies were part of a social discourse intended to curb the excesses of aristocratic men.

An important element of the formulation of masculinity was that Enlightenment philosophy provided a new basis to define power relationships, between the monarch and the people and between the genders. It undermined the traditional equations in power relationships, such as the equation of the relationship between God and mankind, king and subject, and husband and wife (McKeon 2005 11). The process had begun in James I's time in England. As McKeon points out, the problem with absolutist concepts of monarchy and government was that they were made vulnerable if they were explained; they hinged on their supposed self-evidence (McKeon 2005 7). The allegory of the relationship of God and men, the monarch and the people, husband and wife was disrupted if one was questioned. The English Civil War and the Interregnum negated the allegory between God and king; the English were not willing to tolerate absolutism. It was John Locke, a Whig, who provided a new way of constructing the relationship between the monarchy and its people. Locke's arguments were directly aimed at defenders of the absolutist system, such as Sir Robert Filmer. Filmer's *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings*, written in defence of Charles I, was not published until 27 years after the author's death, in the context of the Exclusion Crisis of 1680. Locke's *Two Treatises of Governement* (1689) were a direct response to the work, which was obviously still relevant to those who were against the exclusion of the Catholic James. Locke argued against the traditional equations of power relationships: "the Power of a Magistrate over a Subject, may be distinguished from that of a Father over his Children, a Master over his Servant, a Husband over his Wife, and a Lord over his Slave" (Locke 2003 286). According to Locke a man derived his authority over his wife from nature, while monarchs derived their authority through an implied contract. Locke also pointed out that fathers did not have absolute authority in their family, as mothers shared some responsibility for the children (Rosenthal 2001 93), which heralded the notion of domesticity in which husband and wife were partners. The implications of Locke's contractual theory for the family were already formulated in chapter 2; Mary Astell for example asked why absolute sovereignty was necessary in the family if it was not in the state (Astell 1986 28-29). The separation of the public (state) and the private (family) made it possible to distinguish between them, but it was also, as McKeon points out, never a complete separation, because the institution of marriage was public (McKeon 2005 15).

In the previous chapters, the problematic aspects of the rake and the fop were discussed. Comedies did not only put a spotlight on the problems with masculinity, but also presented a solution. The concepts of politeness and domesticity were already hinted at especially in chapter 5. Domesticity was the method to reform rakes and turn them into valuable members of society. The idea of domesticity is summed up by Shorter as "the family's awareness of itself as a precious emotional unit that must be protected with privacy and isolation from outside intrusion" (Shorter 1975 227). This idea of the family as a precious unit that must be protected was then used as a metaphor for the state, despite the weakening of the link between the relationship between king and subject and husband and wife. Domesticity was propagated as a model of private life for all classes, one that could gloss over social differences and unite a country deeply divided by politics and class. The common ideal of domesticity was that "life with such a woman [a virtuous wife] was not only desirable but also available to virtually anyone, [and] this ideal eventually reached beyond the beliefs of region, faction and religious sect to unify the interests of those groups who were neither extremely powerful nor very poor" (Armstrong 1987 3). McKeon argues that the concept of domesticity only makes sense in the context of the separation of the public and the private and that domesticity can be understood as a subcategory of privacy, although he also cautions that it is not always this simple (McKeon 2005 xx-xxi). Domesticity had its roots in the Enlightenment and in the modern concept of knowledge, which separated the public and the private (McKeon 2005 ix). This section will focus only on certain aspects of domesticity (the use of domesticy for changing the ideology of masculinity) and gloss over others by necessity.

The traditional plot of the comedy focused on sexuality, love and marriage. Rakes and fops clung to an older idea of marriage and family, even though they also rejected marriage as an institution. However, marriage was an important part of patriarchy and of masculine identity, and while rakes and fops on stage occasionally tried to avoid it, they generally approached it as a business venture. The ideal of the domestic marriage ran counter to the established tradition of separate spheres. While men and women in Western Europe interacted frequently with the opposite gender outside their immediate family unit compared to other cultures at the time, the tradition of exclusive male spaces and sociability was also firmly established. Such spaces included the army and the university, institutions where women were banned. Outside these exclusively male institutions, men were also expected to interact with each other rather than with women (see Chapter 5). It was a time when homosociality combined with heterosexuality was the norm. An excessive love of women and pursuit of pleasure was, as made clear above, considered to be effeminate. The fear of effeminacy abounded in 17th- and 18th-century literature and especially in the comedy. The comedy after 1688 was involved in the attempt to change the socially accepted forms of male association. To promote domestic marriage, playwrights who

wanted to provide a positive role model had to find ways to emphasise the masculinity of the domestically inclined protagonists.

Restoration and early 18th-century comedies are a fascinating body of works to study in relation to gender – comedy, a genre traditionally preoccupied with marriage, intersected with domesticity, a discourse that not only touched gender but also politics. However, the discourses surrounding domesticity are often virtually impossible to detangle. Conflicting ideas about marriage were often present in the same play and within the same courtship/marriage plot portrayed on stage. Domesticity served as a metonymy for order and stability; if there was stability in the smallest unit of social organisation, now defined as the married couple, the state would also be stable and well-ordered. Reformation in Cibber's comedies, whether of a rake or an erring wife, Diane Harris argues, aimed to portray the model wife as a woman who transgressed traditional boundaries by Cibber's modern emphasis on marriage as a place where a man could find emotional and sensual satisfaction (Harris 1997 40). A key stumbling block was the value of homosocial relationships. The ideal of domesticity demanded a meaningful heterosocial relationship in addition to its emphasis on heterosexuality. However, as argued previously, homosocial relationships were crucial to the affirmation of masculinity (see chapter 5). Only men could affirm another man's status within the internal hegemony.

The relationship of fops to women was a subject of much scrutiny and misogynistic attacks. Women were increasingly accused of having bad judgement and preferring effeminate fops to worthier (more masculine) men (see Ilford in Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love* (1690), Elder Worthy in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), Manly in Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728) and others). The preference for "pretty Fellows, who want Courage, Honour, Sincerity and every amiable Virtue" is attacked by Wilkes in his 1740 conduct manual *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady* (Wilkes 1740 114) for example and seems to have been a common theme. In Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* Elder Worthy insults Hillaria, the woman he loves, by assuming that she prefers Sir Novelty (II.i.). The problem was the inherent distrust of women shared by most male writers. Women, they implied, cannot be trusted to recognise the worth of a man; while in comedies the most positive female characters were capable of discerning a man's value and making the right choice, the anxiety that a woman might choose the wrong man was still palpable. Clandestine marriages were commonin comedies where the outcome was always positive but the trope also emphasized the possibility of women going against their guardian's wishes. Women who showed too much agency were routinely ridiculed.

There was a long period of transition between the time when arranged marriage was the undisputed standard (or at least, the undisputed right of parents whether they chose to enact it or not), and when love marriage became the accepted norm. In England, the early 18th century is one of

the most interesting moments in this transition (Blewett 1981 77). Marriage as a union between two individuals who love each other and who establish their own family was far from universal in the 18th century (Coontz 2005 145). Among the aristocracy, vast amounts of money were at stake as well as political (or economic) relations and neither men nor women had much choice in whom they married; this choice was considered too important for the whole family to be left to the discretion of young people (Young 1997 11). Current scholarly opinion often dates the beginnings of the celebration of married love and companionship to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century (Coontz 2005 123). Marital love and companionship were newly founded Protestant ideals which directly opposed former Catholic ideals, which glorified celibacy and regarded marriage as a necessary evil (Coontz 2005 134). During the Interregnum and the Restoration, marriage had become a social institution rather than a holy, sanctified union. As such, it was liable to redefinition by the individual. Sexuality and thus marriage had become secularised (Weber 1986 51).

The marriage vow traditionally included the promise of mutual love, which made it necessary to modify the demand of strict obedience to parents. The marriage vow in the Church was a vow before God and it could not be taken lightly by Christian moralists. Most moralists agreed that it was unlawful for parents or guardians to force a couple into marriage, when there was no possibility of them growing to love one another (Blewett 1981 3). But this caveat is vague – who would or could decide if the couple could grow to love one another? In theory, the parents had the duty to "see that the young people were at least content with each other" (Blewett 1981 80), but in comedies parents are too self-absorbed and too narrow-minded to be able to follow this caveat. Writers such as the Reverend Fleetwood in his work *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants, Consider'd in Sixteen Serm*ons (1705) or Daniel Defoe in his poignantly titled *Conjugal Lewdness* (1727) located the reason for the widespread lack of domestic happiness in the want of conjugal affection. They proposed to solve the problem before the marriage even began, by giving the partners the right to choose. The modern approach at the beginning of the 18th century is perhaps best summed up in the closing of Susanne Centlivre's play *The Busie Body* (1709) when Sir Jealous remarks: "By my Example let all Parents move,/ And never strive to cross their Children's Love;/ But still submit that Care to Providence above" (V.iii.175-177).

Love marriage was part of the new ideal of domesticity, designed to tame disruptive male behaviour. The rakes, with their desire for sexual conquests and male bonding, felt no desire for domestic bliss. Disdain for marriage was a large part of the rake's rhetorical repertoire in the comedy. Much of the libertine rhetoric surrounding marriage was similar to that of all men in plays: the fear of cuckolding, even though by admitting that they feared to be cuckolded, they admitted doubts about their own virility (see chapter 5). The other common theme was the idea that a wife would grow stale, because

being with a wife lacked the attraction of novelty. In other words, having sex with one's own wife was not challenging enough. Underneath that rhetoric of staleness was a palpable anxiety about masculinity. As argued in the chapter 5, the use of wit for sexual conquests (as much as the sexual conquests themselves) asserted a man's masculinity, which was closely tied up to his virility. While married men still seduced women, of course, fidelity was the ideal (see for example Burnaby's *The Modish Husband*, 1702, or Cibber's *The Careless Husband*, 1704). Like the rake, the fop was opposed to domesticity and marriage. The fop's hostility towards the domestic ideal was largely due to his inability to form meaningful bonds. However, it was also due to his recognition that only conquests of women, not marriage to them, were valuable to prove his worth as a man, and that a marriage would only serve his purposes if it brought money or furthered his status in the world. The fop's evaluation of the values in his social environment were often correct. His acceptance of them was what made him foolish and effeminate; thus conforming to the flawed values of aristocratic society was connoted as effeminate in the plays and the audience encouraged to stand up against the moral corruption around them to prove their masculinity. The fop, King claims, achieved "a complex satire on structural change" by his "residual publicness and disregard for an increasingly privatised, if not yet domesticated, heterosociality" (King 2004 229).

In their opposition to marriage, rakes and fops were pivotal in the promotion and discussion of the domestic model. The idea that Restoration comedy was fundamentally anti-matrimonial had already been debunked in the 1960s by P.F. Vernon in "Marriage of Convenience and the Moral Code of Restoration Comedy" (1962). He points out that "[u]sually the dramatists try to demonstrate that the promiscuity of the libertine cannot be successful as a way of living because it is 'unnatural'" (371). In 1977 Hume adds to this by remarking that "I myself have read every extant comedy performed in the fifty-year period under consideration here, and I have never found a play which seemed to me genuinely to attack marriage as an institution" (Hume, 1977 29). Even plays such as Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686) and Durfey's *The Fond Husband* (1677), which seem to condone adultery, a marriage of convenience, particularly between an old man and a young woman, is criticised rather than the whole institution. While it goes too far to call Rashley, the lover in *The Fond Husband*, "scarcely more" than a plot device, as Hume does (Hume 1977 29), the play itself does not challenge marriage as an institution. We might feel sympathy for Rashley and Emilia, but the implication is that the marriage of convenience between Emilia and Bubble is flawed, while a marriage between Rashley and Emilia could have been successful. Few comedies present an alternative to traditional marriage. An exception was Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love* from 1690. As discussed in chapter 5, Sir Anthony (Lucy in male disguise) refuses the option of marrying the man she loves because she has fully internalised the idea that a husband will inevitably cheat on his wife. She rather keeps the possibility open of remaining his mistress (the precise

nature of their intended relationship is never made clear). The ending does not affirm the anti-domestic bias of the rake, but it highlights the problematic reality of marriage. (In the domestic discourse, Lucy would not be a good wife for Valentine because her wit is superior.)

A classic example for the rake's antipathy to marriage is Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671). Rhodophil's excuse to his friend Palamede for not having been in touch for three years is that "[t]he greatest misfortune imaginable is fallen upon/ me" (I.i.140-141): he has married. Rodophil himself admits that his wife is accomplished and Palamede is clever enough to realise that Rodophil only disdains his own wife because he is married to her (I.i.163-164) so Palamede recommends that his friend get a mistress (I.i.184). Over twenty years later, Loveless in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) expresses similar sentiments about his wife. The language which these men employ to discuss wives and mistresses clearly reveals that they think of women as commodities with an expiration date. In the comedies, one surprising voice against this treatment of women as chattel comes from Young Fashion, an otherwise mercenary younger brother. In Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) Young Fashion voices his disapproval of the prostitutes his brother (Lord Foppington) enjoys, and when his brother asks why he should not value a woman that can be bought like a horse he replies: "Because a woman has a heart to dispose of; a horse/ has none" (III.i.15-39). He is not overly worried about his wife's, Hoyden's, heart later on as he clearly cannot afford to focus on domestic bliss as a younger son without any fortune. Vanbrugh's play is, as stated before, a bleak judgement on contemporary society. It might however be argued, that Young Fashion's assurance that he will allow his wife to take lovers and that he won't imprison her like her father did, acknowledges her as a person rather than a commodity. The comedies of Cibber and Steele attempt a more optimistic view. In order for domestic bliss to occur, however, the rakes have to learn to appreciate at least one woman as above the value of a horse (or other commodities). The fops always remain unable to do so.

The attacks in pamphlets against effeminacy (see chapter 4) indicate the strong connection between effeminacy and the perceived threat to a concept of marriage which had recently developed. The fops were in opposition to companionate marriage and domesticity. Some of them contemplated marriage or were married, but none of them formed a true bond with his wife. Although the fop enjoyed the company of women, at home he clung to the separate spheres and saw himself as quite separate from his wife. Wycherley's *The Country Wife* shows an early example of this:

> HARCOURT I am obliged to you indeed, dear friend. I would
> be well with her only to be well with thee still. For these
> ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends. I would be
> contented she should enjoy you a-nights, but I would have
> have you to myself a-days, as I have had, dear friend.
> SPARKISH And thou shalt enjoy me a-days, dear, dear

> friend, never stir; and I'll be divorced from her sooner than
> from thee. Come along. (III.ii.)

Harcourt describes the newer ideal of a married life, companionate marriage. This ideal has no place in the old-fashioned male world of Sparkish. The exchange between Sparkish and Harcourt also illustrates in how much contempt Harcourt (as well as Horner and Dorilant) holds Sparkish as Harcourt has no qualms about deceiving him. Sparkish's lack of jealousy also provides a foil to his brother-in-law Pinchwife's excessive jealousy. Pinchwife begins to shun the company of other men once he is married to protect his honour, not because he enjoys the company of his wife. Sparkish is his opposite: he can scarcely make time for his fiancée while seeking to further his bonds with his male circle. Sparkish is also the one character in the play that is close to the court and is very concerned with his standing there. Sparkish is ambitious to further his standing in society, and even as a fop, he is clever enough to understand that domesticity and attention to his fiancée or wife would not further his position at court in the 1670s.

As has been discussed in chapter 5, Sparkish's disinterest in affairs is atypical for fops. Their threat to the domestic ideal was their excessive and obsessive pursuit of women, as much as their effeminacy. Berinthia in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) claims that fops (which she calls "beaux") pursue so many women at the same time that they never get anywhere with one woman.

> BERINTHIA […] They
> have had so little practice, they don't understand the trade. But
> besides their ignorance, you must know there is not one of my half
> score lovers but what follows half a score mistresses. Now their
> affections being divided amongst so many, are not strong enough
> for anyone to make 'em pursue her to the purpose. Like a young
> puppy in a warren, they have a flirt at all, and catch none.
> (II.i. 453-459)

The fops are thus theoretically more harmless than the rake, but, as Berinthia cautions a few lines later, the beaux actually attempt to destroy a woman's honour, presumably to increase their own masculine value. Sir John Roverhead in Pix's *The Beau Defeated* (1700) fits into her description of fops: he flirts with every woman in the play. When he first appears on stage, to visit Mrs. Richly, he finds Lady Landsworth and Mrs. Richly's maid Betty. He first attempts to charm Lady Landworth, who leaves in disgust, and then Betty, the maid, who calls it an "excess of French breeding" (I.i.381). The implication here seems to be that Sir John is either asexual or homosexual, and his excessive interest in women an excess of manners rather than an expression of a real desire to seduce.

At the end of every Restoration comedy there was at least one marriage proposal or the disclosure of a clandestine marriage, but often one of the plots was about the reconciliation of a married couple

too. Marriage had long been seen as the smallest unit of social organisation, as a model of the state (e.g. in Filmer). After the Restoration and into the 18th century, when the state was threatened almost constantly and when the Whigs and the Tories had opposing ideas of how power should be distributed, the stability of the family felt more urgent. While early Restoration comedies differ little from those of the Renaissance in their treatment of love and marriage, they increasingly emphasised domestic happiness as the guarantee for stability. This tenet did not only extend to marriage; the comedies after the Restoration also scrutinised the relationship between parents and their adult or adolescent children as part of the reframing of patriarchy. Harsh fathers (or mothers or guardians) who demanded strict obedience to their selfish demands lost their authority. It would be beyond the scope of this work to analyse further how such relationships connected to the formulation of domestic happiness between husband and wife beyond the discussion in chapter 5. Unreasonable parents were punished in the comedies by their children's justified disobedience; straying rakes were more commonly reformed and allowed to find happiness.

Repentance, Reformation, Reclamation

In chapter 3, the rake was defined as a generally reformable character. This trait distinguishes him from the fop, who cannot reform. The reformation of a rake is as much part of the Restoration and early 18th century as the expectation of marriage at the end of a comedy. Not all rakes reformed to the same extent but at the end of the comedy most of them were, to some degree, tamed and ready to be less disruptive members of society. The reformation trope, while it was pervasive, was more complicated than it might appear. While reformation (and especially repentance) could threaten a man's masculinity by restraining his displays of virility, the reformation scenes aimed to prove that reformation was congruent with natural masculine superiority and suggested that reformation reinforced the patriarchy. Reformation, for the purpose of this chapter, means the rake's renunciation of his philandering and his submission to marriage. While the trope was popular, it must also be stressed that male chastity was only relevant in the context of a romantic commitment. The idea that a man should refrain from sexual activities before he married was held by some, especially religious, commenters, but was also controversial (Rosenthal 2001 108, see also chapter 5).

The reformation trope highlights the anxiety surrounding the establishment of hegemonic masculinity. The disruptive nature of aristocratic conceptions of masculinity was perceived as threatening social stability and patriarchy. In the fragile political climate the violent and reckless nature of the rake was seen as a real threat. The fictional reformation of a rake was thus an escapist fantasy in which the vices of the rake on stage were connected to larger political issues which could be resolved by reason and the adjustment of gender identity. While Steele strongly disapproved of Etherege's *The*

Man of Mode (see chapter 2), this great reformer of manners was also a defender of the rake. On June 11, 1709, he wrote in the *Tatler* No 27: "In my [last] Discourse […], I omitted to mention the most agreeable of all bad Characters; and that is, a Rake" (Steele 1709b 206). He claims that a rake is to be pitied, and if he lives long enough, he is sure to be reformed, as "His Desires run away with him through the Strength and Force of a lively Imagination, which hurries him on to unlawful Pleasures, before Reason has Power to come to his Rescue" (Steele 1709b 206). Steele was sometimes considered to have written a portrait of himself in this portrait of a rake (Bond 1987, Footnote 4 to Steele 1709b 206); his own youth and experiences in the army might have led him to a more lenient judgment of the rake. It is worth noting, however, that a defining criterion of the rake was, for Steele, his ability to eventually reform (which did not mean that every rake reformed).

At the end of Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), Dorimant is reformed to the extent that he seems to have come to an agreement with Harriet. At the same time, however, he makes up with his mistress, Mrs. Loveit, and attempts but fails to make up with his other mistress, Bellinda. After that, Harriet warns him that if he comes to see her in the country, he will find her in a very lonely house and she asks him: "Does not this stagger your resolution?" Dorimant replies: "Not at all, madam. The first time I saw you, you left me/ with the pangs of love upon me; and this day my soul has quite/ given up her liberty." This is questionable in its hyperbole. Harriet's answer is ambiguous: "This is more dismal than the country!" (V.ii.395-398) At the end of the play, Dorimant is thus still fully in charge; he will decide whether he makes the trip to the country and marry Harriet (with her fortune) or if he prefers to stay in London unmarried. The witty (and virtuous) heroine has no power over him. Yet while *The Man of Mode* is at first glance a celebration of the witty rake-hero, the play undercuts Dorimant's appeal in several ways. In some ways, he is as threatening as Don John and he is certainly as successful as him. He does not physically rape anyone but he does not hesitate one second to seduce and drop any woman he comes across.

By 1690, the trope of reformation through domesticity was already so entrenched in the popular consciousness that Congreve could poke fun at it in *Love for Love*. Mrs. Frail berates Valentine for being too obviously interested in Angelica and for forgetting his manners (by not being civil to her). He asks her: "But what if he have more Passion than /Manners?" She answers: "Then let him Marry and reform" (I.i.630-632). The answer is ironic of course and shows how clichéd the trope of "marry and reform" was. Valentine's answer is somewhat odd for a man who desperately wants to marry the woman he loves (Angelica): "Marriage indeed may qualify the fury of his/ passion, but it very rarely mends a man's manners" (I.i.633-634). Mrs. Frail answers that it really mends a man's manners as a husband is only rude to his wife and civil to everyone else. In this short scene, the old discourse of women as commodities (upheld by a woman, Mrs. Frail) and the newer discourse of women as (inferior) partners

in marriage clash. Both are satirised and while the play's ending is not ironic, it is ambiguous. Valentine is not as much in need of reformation as of money. Angelica reforms him to some extent as she only accepts him after his schemes fail. When he gives in to his father's demands to sign papers which exclude him from the inheritance and says that his "only pleasure was to please that lady", she tears the paper apart. Angelica's trial of Valentine's virtue emasculates him to some degree, as it was usually a man's role to test a woman's virtue (see Bueler 2001). Valentine's friend Scandal is moved to some kind of reformation by Angelica's actions. In the penultimate speech of the play Scandal says:

> Well, madam, you have done Exemplary
> Justice, in punishing an inhumane Father and
> rewarding a Faithful Lover. But there is a
> Third good Work, which I, in particular, must
> thank you for; I was an Infidel to your Sex; and
> you have converted me. […] (V.i.708-713)

Angelica has the last word in the play and she corrects Scandal by telling him that "the miracle today is that we find/ A lover true, not that a woman's kind" (V.i.728-729). Congreve's play is difficult to place in the development of the reformed rake trope. Reformation takes place, but it has a different quality compared to those in later plays, especially those by Cibber and Johnson. It is, however, taken more seriously than in plays of the earlier Restoration (for example Wycherley, *Love in a Wood* (1673), Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) or Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686)).

Loveless in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) is one of the best examples of the reformed rake trope, which made the play popular. While Loveless is most eloquent in his regret about his sexual infidelity and his abandoning of his wife, his sexual profligacy is not the only thing that he needs to reform.

> The original fault of Loveless, presented by Cibber as in need of reform, is not 'worldliness' but unworldliness. With his characteristic sensitivity to the opportune, Cibber seems in Loveless' story to have produced a kind of satire of the 'wit' and 'fine gentleman' who is too proud to have anything to do with money and investment and rising in the state. (Drougge 1982 70)

Moral and economy are intertwined in a manner in which they rarely were before. *Love's Last Shift* (1696) promotes domesticity and happiness within marriage, but while Loveless is the one who has to reform, the play shifts part of the blame for libertinism to women. Amanda, having tricked her husband into spending a night with her (whom he does not recognise), proceeds to interrogate him about his marriage, asking why he left his wife. His answer is the standard rake credo:

> Because she grew stale, and I cou'd not whore in quiet for
> her: Besides, she was always exclaiming against my Extravagancies,
> particularly my Gaming, which she so violently oppos'd, that I
> fancy'd a Pleasure in it, which since I never found; (V.ii.52-57)

While his desire for "whoring" has been part of the problem, as well as the lack of novelty, we also learn of Amanda's fault; without her objections, Loveless would not have become a gamester. This speech relieves Loveless of some of the responsibility for the failure of their marriage. While Cibber's portrayal of the rake is less favourable than that of earlier comedies, a comedy such as Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1671) is less censorious towards wives. Rodophile's eventual reconciliation with his wife is not effected by her but neither was it her fault that her husband had grown weary of her before the play begins.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, Loveless has always been a reformable rake, a man whom the wicked times have swayed but who is, at heart, no rake. Young Worthy, who in the conversation with Loveless, Amanda's husband, claims to be "in Love with Wickedness" (I.i.118), consoles Amanda by saying that:

> Y. Wor. […] Now, I am confident, 'twas more an Affectation of
> being fashionably vicious, than any reasonable Dislike he cou'd
> either find in your Mind or Person: (I.i.417-419)

Libertinism is suddenly an "Affectation of being fashionably vicious". By treating libertinism as a fashionable affection, Young Worthy (who seems to be Cibber's mouthpiece in many scenes) assumes a natural state of secure heterosexual masculinity which can be masked but not eliminated in most men (the play's fop does not seem to mask this kind of natural masculinity). At his core, the aristocratic libertine is not as frightening as he appears, Cibber appears to suggest. Young Worthy is also a self-proclaimed rake seeking to marry the coquettish heiress Narcissa. He initially has no intention to become a husband of the kind he tries to reform Loveless into.

Young Worthy's generous behaviour towards Amanda, which allows for the play's happy ending, contrasts starkly with his attitude towards Narcissa. His concluding soliloquy at the end of the first act is anything but a manifesto for love and reform: "The Wise and Grave may tell us of strange Chimera's call'd Virtues/ in a Woman, and that they alone are the best Dowry; but, faith,/ we younger Brothers are of another Mind"(I.i.525-527). Marriage for a younger brother is, in his realistic world, a business. Young Worthy's claim that he intends to purge out his "wild humours" with matrimony "like the rest of my raking Brotherhood" in Act I (I.i.143-144) might hint at a way to improve his financial affairs, namely by reforming and thus wasting less money on pleasure. The lifestyle of a rake was unsustainable; and Young Worthy implies that these economic factors drove a man to reform rather than anything a woman did. Young Worthy starts to feel guilty about his own libertinism shortly before his marriage to Narcissa (V.i.99-102). Amanda reforms not only her husband but also Young Worthy by proxy. It is the association with this virtuous lady that has a stabilising effect on Young Worthy too without emasculating him, as he is always the one in control of the plots. At the end of the play, Young Worthy's

split personality between a deceitful rake and benevolent protector collapses, a more powerful albeit more subtle transformation than the one Loveless undergoes. At the end of *Love's Last Shift* the threat from libertinism is gone; Loveless professes to no longer be a libertine and he no longer poses a threat and neither does Young Worthy. In *Love's Last Shift* male association is undercut, although the play sits on the fence on the question of whether a man should prefer the company of his wife or not. Domesticity is only validated in the case of Loveless and Amanda and Amanda is portrayed as an exceptional woman. However, Young Worthy's ceaseless effort to dupe Loveless to restore his marriage as well as his more self-serving efforts to have his older brother married to Hillaria and himself to Narcissa ultimately bring about the ending that promises order and stability. The only threat remains the fop Sir Novelty Fashion, but his plans to seduce either Hillaria or Narcissa have been foiled and Young Worthy and Loveless have proven themselves superior to him.

The textual history of Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* from 1699 adds another angle to the discussion of reformation scenes. The first edition of the play contained a scene in which Wildair's reformation resembled that of Loveless. In the second edition, however, the scene is altered. Both versions begin by Wildair wrongly insinuating that Angelica is a prostitute and Angelica then showing him a letter that proves that he has been misled by Vizard. In the first edition, his reaction is to profusely apologise and offer marriage (explicitly not only offering his love but also his fortune). When she accepts he exults "Beauty without Art! Vertue [sic] without Pride! and/ Love without Ceremony! The Day breaks glorious to my/ o'erclouded Thought and darts its smiling Beams into my/ Soul". The scene concludes with Angelica warning him to stop drinking, which he happily promises to do. The revised version is very different in its tone. Wildair's reaction to the letter is that he "*Looks foolish and hums a Song*" and remarks "Oh poor Sir Harry, what have thy angry stars design'd?" (V.i.219). He politely bows to the reprimands Angelica and her mother make. When her mother suggests that he should fight Vizard or marry Angelica, he muses alone on his dilemma: "I must commit/ Murder, or commit Matrimony, which is best now? [...] Cowards dare fight, I'll marry,/ that's the most daring Action of the two [...]" (V.i. 240-245). Wildair retains the anti-domestic ideology of earlier rake figures. He does not explain why it would be more "daring" to marry; he might very likely be referring to the possible emasculation through the close association to his wife. Proving his masculinity as a husband is more dangerous and therefore more daring than proving it by duelling according to Wildair's ideology. His reformation is not as complete as Loveless's but it is more convincing as Wildair manages to incorporate domesticity into traditionally masculine values such as courage. Marriage is daring not only, as the play's surface bawdily insinuates, because of the danger of being cuckolded but also because it forces a man to become responsible.

Cibber's third original comedy, *The Careless Husband* (1704), is very different from Farqhuar's *The Constant Couple* (1699), which still toys with older notions of masculinity and patriarchy. *The Careless Husband* was famous at the time for the subtle way in which a dutiful wife regains a rakish husband. Sir Charles is initially contemptuous of his wife's virtues and complains to Lord Foppington that "Virtues in a Wife are good for nothing/ but to make her Proud and put the World in Mind of her Hus-/band's Faults" (II.ii.154-156). To this Lord Foppington replies affirmatively, adding that, shockingly enough, virtuous women actually dare to expect fidelity from their husbands: "And strike me Blind but the Women of Virtue are now grown such Ideots [sic] in Love, they expect of a Man, just as they do of a Coach-Horse, that one's Appetite, like t'other's Flesh, should increase by feeding" (II.ii.157-160). Lord Foppington, as a typical fop, regards women as a commodity but is indignant when he feels that women do the same with him. By sharing the same views as the effeminate Lord Foppington, Sir Charles's inevitable reformation is shown to make him more of a man, rather than emasculating him. The culmination of *The Careless Husband* is the so-called Steinkirk scene, where Sir Charles sees the error of his ways. In V.i. Lady Easy finds her husband and her maid Edging asleep in two chairs next to each other. His wig has fallen off. Lady Easy is shocked and initially determined to wake him up and accuse him, but she decides against it: "I'll talk to him till he blushes, nay 'till he/ Frowns on me, perhaps. – and then/ I'm lost again" (V.v.10-12). Sir Charles, even though he is clearly in the wrong, still holds a position superior to that of his wife; she is even afraid of his "frown". And worse, she remembers that he would be within his right to be indignant about being woken up by her, his wife, as the fault for his vices might lie with her (V.v.15-20). She humbly changes her original intention of waking him up and confronting him and instead *"takes a Steinkirk off her Neck, and lays it gently on his Head"* (V.v.26) to protect him from a cold and withdraws without waking him. When Sir Charles Easy finally wakes up, he notices the handkerchief on his head and realises how wonderfully tactful and caring she is: "let me/ be therefore pleas'd to tell you now, your wondrous Conduct has/ wak'd me to a Sense of your Disquiet past, and Resolution never/ to disturb it more " (V.vi. 97-100). In other words, Sir Charles is now ready to take on responsibility for the happiness of others, rather than only looking for his personal pleasures.

Sir Charles's sentiments are remarkably similar to what the reverend Fleetwood proposed in his vision of the process to reform a husband in his conduct book *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants*, which was published one year after Cibber's play (1705):

> when they [men] shall remember and reflect upon the Carriage and Conversation of their Wives, and find, that instead of falsifying their Vows of Faith and Chastity, they have most carefully and religiously observ'd them; [...] manag'd themselves so nicely, virtuously and well, that they have given them neither secret Jealousy within, nor Shame and Infamy abroad, [...] A

> man must be of a horribly hard, inflexible Ill-nature whom such Reflections
> will not soften into Love and Pity. (Fleetwood 1705 148)

In Fleetwood's conception of reformation he makes the same convoluted argument that Cibber makes in his comedies, giving women the task of being actively virtuous and faithful while remaining passive and obedient. The reformation itself comes from within the husband, fuelled by his reflections. Sir Charles, it is implied from the beginning of the play, is not a horribly hard man, but rather a man too inclined to pleasure and too easily influenced by the worldly ways of his friends and acquaintances. It is male association that has debauched him. And, importantly, his own reflections are what make him reform rather than rational arguments on the behalf of his wife. To be out-reasoned by a woman would emasculate him. In the beginning of the play, the still weak Sir Charles does not recognise this important aspect of an ideal marital relationship. "*Sir Cha*. Nay, if she won't tell a Man of his Faults, when she sees/ 'em, how the Duce should he mend 'em?" (III.i. 42-43). It does not seem to occur to him that he, as a man, needs to mend his own faults. Through his wife's tact she enables him to come to his own conclusions and thus maintain his position.

There might however be some doubt about this reading of Sir Charles's reformation. Harris claims that Sir Charles only begins to admire his wife and her patience when he realises that this patience is a mask (Harris 1997 46-47), a "Vizor of patience" as Lady Easy calls it in Act V (V.v.7). Sir Charles confuses patience with indifference. Lady Easy has been patient in her behaviour; if she had been indifferent, there would have been no need for patient behaviour at all. In Act I he interrogates his wife, trying to make her admit that she is jealous of him and even giving her the names of his two lovers, but he cannot make her admit that she has ever suspected him. After she has gone, he exclaims:

> Sir Cha. [...] Well! One way or other this Woman
> will certainly bring about her Business with me at last; for tho' she
> can't make me happy in her own Person, she lets me be so intolera-
> bly easie with the Women that can, that has at least brought
> me into a fair way of being as weary of them too. (I.i.268-272)

Her acceptance of his extra-marital affairs makes them stale to him and even before he reconciles with his wife, he seems to become bored with his way of life. He even implies that he suspects his wife, who bears everything he does, of intending to do "her Business" with him, of scheming to stop him from his erratic behaviour. It seems as likely that it is precisely the sign that she is not happy about letting him be "intolerably easie" with other women which makes him look at her as a woman again. He is "easie" in other ways too: while fighting with his lover Lady Graveairs he declares that he is "of late grown so very lazy" (III.i.140) that he would rather lose a lover than go through any trouble in order to keep her (III.i.140-152). These scenes also suggest, however, that Sir Charles was never a truly dark character; he sinned because it was the custom and because the flawed morals of his class made it so easy for

him. Once he recognises that he needs to be firm and take a stand, he can be a model husband with all its 18th-century patriarchal implications: when he heads towards domestic bliss, he finally deserves his position as the head of the household, which his wife has granted him all along. The threat from libertinism is thus portrayed as more harmless than it appeared.

Charles Johnson created a heroine very similar to Lady Easy in *The Wife's Relief* (1712) with the telling subtitle *The Husband's Cure*. It portrays four rakes, three of whom are already semi-reformed. The fourth, Riot, disdains his wife and his contempt of matrimony is as harsh as those of Cibber's Loveless in *Love's Last Shift* of 1696 or Dryden's Rodophil and Palamede in *Marriage à la Mode* (1671), if not more so. The manner in which Riot talks about his mistress is telling; like Lord Foppington he compares a woman to a horse. After he tries to seduce Arabella and is rebuffed, he muses in a soliloquy: "In Love with thee! No, *Arabella*/ no, my Brute calls for Enjoyment; I have a mind to you, as/ a Man may have to a handsom [sic] Horse or a fine House" (I.ii.). The commodification of Arabella (who lives in his house as a kinswoman to his wife) is obvious: she is in the same category as luxury items. He also, however, dehumanises his own desire to some extent. It is not quite clear what his "Brute" is. It might literally be his phallus which demands gratification or it might be his libertine persona that is modelled after the fashion for libertinism.

The attempts by Riot's wife Cynthia to soften him with virtue and piety (as for example Fleetwood prescribes) are failures. She first tries to soften him by acting submissively and asking for him to tell her what her faults are so she can mend them. He, on the other hand, wishes for the possibility of divorce. Cynthia's speech in which she changes tactics thrice reveals the common discourses on reformation:

> Come, Sir, leave this common Place Raillery upon
> Marriage – 'tis poor – every pitiful Ape of a Libertine is
> full of it – Let me speak your Judgment, I know you
> have Reason when you please to use it – Since I may not
> hope to regain your deprav'd Desires – to become a pleasing
> Wife, let me at least be thought an agreeable Companion, a ser-
> viceable Friend. (I.ii.)

At first she calls his attacks on matrimony fashionable, much in the vein that Cibber did in his comedies. By calling the libertines "apes" she negates their humanity, and consequently their masculinity, as well as their individuality. She attempts to place Riot above it, by using the second tactic of assuming that rational reflection will cure depravity. The Reformation of Manners, and especially Addison and Steele, attempted to reform men by appealing to their reason (*The Spectator* was published at the time). Her third tactic is submissiveness as prescribed in conduct manuals (e.g. Savile's *Advice to a Daughter* 1688, or Fleetwood's *The Relative Duties* 1705). However, in order to be considered an "agreeable companion" or a "serviceable friend" Riot has to acknowledge her as being more than a commodity.

Even though Cynthia has seemingly resigned, she insists on a version of domesticity, one in which her husband's masculinity would be compatible with a close relationship with his wife. Riot's answer shows that he is unable (at this point) to conceive of women as anything but sex objects or bawds. He translates "serviceable friend" as "pimp" and orders his wife to convince Arabella to become his mistress.

Cynthia obediently asks Arabella to become Riot's mistress in Act II.ii but clarifies that she is forced to ask. In Act III.i. it is revealed that when Arabella invites Riot to her bed, Cynthia has already planned that they will exchange chambers. This is essentially the same plan Young Worthy and Amanda use in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) to reform Loveless. By sleeping with his wife he would have rediscovered the joys of matrimony. However, she fails because Riot loses heavily while gambling and in exchange for an interest-free loan from Volatile sends him to the rendezvous instead. In a scene similar to the reformation scene in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) Cynthia reveals the exchange to Riot, asking him if the experience has not convinced him that a wife is as good as a mistress. Riot believes that he is now a cuckold and the plan fails. In the last scene of the play (V.iii.) Riot becomes obsessed with his "horns". In chapter 5 cuckolding was described as sexual warfare among men, but in this play Johnson uses the widespread fear of being cuckolded to reform a rake. Arabella and Volatile tease Riot about his horns while the other two couples of the play are also present. He tries to challenge Volatile to an impromptu duel, but the other male protagonists have already reformed their duelling ways and prevent him. However, he finally admits that he deserved "this treatment from that Lady, who I believe is virtuous". Cynthia then tells him it was a "jest" and that nothing happened. Volatile claims to have found both ladies waiting for him and Cynthia ready to deliver a moral lecture and to "chide you into Honesty". The audience might have been a bit doubtful about that; in Act III Cynthia does not plan to give a lecture but to switch chambers with Arabella. However, Riot repents and vows to never "stray again - no, not in Thought".

The reconciliation is followed by a dance, but after the dance Volatile promises Riot that they will "draw" him "by just Degrees to Virtue's Charms; nor dare at once to/ show you all her Lustre". This plan for the future distinguishes Johnson's reformation from those in Cibber's play by acknowledging that a true reformation takes longer. Riot is, however, still in the reformed rake mode and answers that the Libertine's Joys are all

> short, and false, as Feaverish Dreams, wherein the whole Animal
> Oeconomy is miserably torn and distracted, to support a momentary
> Delirium – Nor can the most extravagant Voluptuary, in all his ex-
> pensive Pursuits possess a Blessing like a good Wife. (V.iii.)

As in Cibber's plays, the rake's debauched life is not true to his nature; Riot does not call it a modish affection, as Young Worthy does, but seems to incorporate reform into his philosophy; Arabella has just

told him that he might be an "Epicure" at home. His new insight seems to be a variation on neo-Epicurian and Lucretian thought. "Animal Oeconomy" is reminiscent of those philosophers, but rather than considering his former desires natural, Riot now thinks of them as a disease. The rest of the play also does not align with Cibber's message: vice and violence are not attributed to fashion but to the expected behaviour of a gentleman. Johnson's play is thus a more direct attack against aristocratic constructions of masculinity than Cibber's plays. It is noteworthy that while the plan works in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) on a rake, in Burnaby's play *The Modish Husband* (1702) Lady Promise attempts to reform her husband Lord Promise with a similar method (I.i.) but fails because he is a fop.

The reformation trope was also popular in other genres. The most famous fictional reformation was that of Mr. B in Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), but even before it was published, prose texts of various genres also often contained reform plots. Many were focused on the reform of wives or of unmarried women (such as Mary Davys's *The Reformed Coquet*, 1724), but rake reform was also common. One example of a contemporary novel is Eliza Haywood's *Love in Excess*, published in 1719-1720. In another form of prose narration, the publisher Edmund Curll attached two such stories to *Atterburyana. Being Misceallanies by the late Bishop of Rochester &c* from 1719: *The Virgin Seducer: A true History* and *The Batchelor-Keeper: Or, modern Rake*. In both those stories the fictional narrator "Philatetus" reasons with a rake and reforms them both through his conversation. The most famous real-life reformation during the Restoration was that of the Earl of Rochester on his deathbed, which has already been discussed in chapter 3. Burnet's book was a bestseller and remained popular during the period discussed here. While Samuel Johnson condemned Rochester in his description of Rochester's life, he recommended it to the readers of his "Life of Rochester" (Johnson 2006c 12). The French philosopher Blaise Pascal had followed a similar project, yet on a more theoretical basis. In his posthumously published *Pensées* he "engages in a dialogue with contemporary French libertinism, addressing his arguments to those who 'want to be cured of unbelief'" (Chernaik 1995 81). Pascal believed that there were those libertine atheists who were indifferent and only occupied with pleasure without a thought for the afterlife and those who were guilt-ridden and unhappy, in search of faith (Chernaik 1995 82). The latter atheists were those which Pascal hoped to reach and reform. The qualitative difference between these reformations and those on stage is obvious: the historical libertine had more to repent than his moral shortcomings; it was his atheism that he refuted. Very few characters in comedies ever declare themselves to be outright atheists for reasons discussed in chapter 4. Atheism was such a shocking vice, it would have made reformation less believable and changed the tone of play. Debauchery and amorality stood in for atheism and the audience would have understood the absence of morals as an absence of moral conviction. The rake's repentance for his sins represented the repentance of his atheism (or agnosticism), which was underlined by the sometimes quasi-religious language employed.

Like Pascal, playwrights from the early Restoration onwards seemed to have presumed two basic varieties of the rake: one that could be reformed and one that could not. While some pre-revolution comedies feature types that do not quite fit into the scheme (e.g. Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), whose reformation is questionable), the desperately debauched rakes of Cibber fit into the type of the guilt-ridden, unhappy atheist (the lack of intellectual brilliance reflects the author's capability more than his intention). Even if the uncertain reformations are taken out, there are a number of rakes left who are unreformed at the end of the play: Horner in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), Ranger and Rashley in Durfey's *The Fond Husband* (1677), Florio in Crowne's *City Politic*s (1683), Young Fashion and Loveless in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) and Archer in Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707), for example. Doubtful reformations include Dorimant's in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), Willmore's in Behn's *The Rover* (1677), Scandal's in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), Young Worthy's in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696) and Worthy's in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696). The most extreme example of an unrepentant rake is Don John in Shadwell's English adaption of Don Juan, *The Libertine* of 1675. His extraordinary characteristics have already been discussed above; no other rake stands to lose so much by remaining unreformed and unrepentant. Don John is literally dragged to hell and still does not repent. Horner, in William Wycherley's comedy of the same year, *The Country Wife* (1675), is also unrepentant, though not punished. The last lines of the play are a soliloquy by Horner: "Vain fops but court, and dress, and keep a pother/ To pass for women's men with one another;[27]/ But he who aims by women to be prized,/ First by the men, you see, must be despised" (V.iv.460-463). Horner's plan, which he hatches at the beginning of the play, has worked. He abandons the traditional method of asserting his masculinity by winning his friends' approval. By foregoing marriage and the possibility of having an heir to carry on his family, as was traditional, he has put himself outside society. He is not even a threat as a cuckold; even Pinchwife pretends to believe his wife's innocence at the end because it she has only been with the allegedly impotent Horner. His sexual exploits do not threaten to disrupt society.

Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), a response to Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), picks up Cibber's theme of reformation in both its plots. Loveless opens *The Relapse* with a soliloquy echoing the language used in Cibber's comedy after his reformation (I.i.1-17). Dramatic conventions dictate that this peaceful life has to end, but underneath his lofty words it is also easy to detect other sentiments. He is also not very repentant: the false face of luxury was just too strong for a simple man to resist. As soon as Loveless entered London he went to the theatre alone. What he saw on stage appears to have been *The Relapse*:

[27] While Horner uses "fop" in the sense of "fool" here, this is one example for the narrowing of the meaning of fop discussed in chapter 4.

> Know then, I happened in the play to find my very
> character, only with the addition of a relapse;
> (II.i.39-40)

The play had a short moral effect. He stopped admiring "the workmanship of nature" (II.i.42-43) of a lady near him, a form of entertainment that, he assures Amanda, was perfectly harmless. As it turns out, the young lady is Berinthia, a relative of Amanda whom she invites to live with them. True to his sentiments in the opening soliloquy, that his debauchery was not really his fault, in his soliloquy at the beginning of Act III.ii. he blames fate for bringing Berinthia in his house. He also reminds himself that Amanda has freed him, "a grovelling slave", from "that black tyrant vice" (III.ii.13-15). But he fails to find proof of his love for Amanda; he is apparently unable to picture himself remaining faithful to Amanda out of a feeling of virtue. It is not surprising that when Berinthia enters, he immediately succumbs to temptation and attempts to seduce her. When Lord Foppington offers Loveless his bride's (Hoyden's) virtue as a means to take revenge on him for his attempt to seduce Amanda, Loveless declines in his last line in the play: "You need not fear, sir; I'm too fond of my own wife, to have / the least inclination to yours" (V.v.68-69). This line is bitterly ironic. His words and sentiments are the same as in the last scene in *Love's Last Shift*, but Worthy, Amanda, Berinthia and the audience, if not Lord Foppington, know them to be false. Loveless still employs sentimental language but it has become a mask.

Loveless fails, but in the penultimate scene of the play, a rake reforms: Worthy. Worthy apparently does not have any relation to the Worthy brothers in Cibber's play. However, the name must have evoked them in the original audience, who were clearly expected to know Cibber's play. Worthy is Berinthia's former lover, who convinces her to help him seduce Amanda so that Loveless has more time to pursue an affair with Berinthia (III.ii.192-199). In planning this intrigue with Berinthia, he shows himself as a typical rake, employing his wit to scheme a seduction. In Act V.iv. Worthy finds Amanda in the most opportune moment for seduction: she has just come home after discovering Loveless's deceit. But he finds that his words have no effect on Amanda; not because Amanda does not like him, but after discovering that Loveless has been unfaithful despite his vows of love she distrusts all men. She tells him that there is only one way he can prove his love: "I shall believe you love me as you ought, if, from this/ moment, you forbear to ask whatever is unfit for me to grant" (V.iv. 99-100). Worthy first tries to negotiate about what is unfit by taking and kissing her hand but finally gives in and swears to remain chaste (V.iv.148-157).

David S. Berkely argues that Vanbrugh was well aware that "Worthy's conversion was too exalted to harmonize with satiric comedy" (Berkely 1952 232). Drougge reads the scene differently. She argues that Loveless and Worthy merge and that the rake in the form of Worthy has become 'worthy' again by

non-consummation (Drougge 1994 513). It is easy to forget that Worthy, too, is a married man, as this has only be mentioned in passing (V.ii.99). In his conversion he does not mention his wife and it seems unlikely that she will profit from his reformation. Drougge imagines that he will become an eternal philanderer, never consummating his desire but not remaining faithful in the adoration of one woman (Drougge 1994 514). Overall the ending of *The Relapse* is bleak; the penultimate scene contains the doubtful reformation of a rake, while the last scene is an inversion of the happy ending of *Love's Last Shift*: we can hardly expect any of the married couples on stage to be happy once the curtain closes and one nearly envies Lord Foppington, who escapes unmarried.

Reformation corrected the rake's problematic conception of his masculinity and replaced it with a new, less disruptive conception of masculinity. The sexual and physical dominance of rakes had been undermined in the comedies from the early Restoration onward. Even a character like Dorimant in Etherege's *The Man of Mod*e (1676), who is in control of every plot of the play, is revealed to have built his dominance on a shaky foundation and the ending of the play does not see him triumphant. Comedies revealed the problematic concepts on which libertinism as hegemonic masculinity was built and the trend of portraying libertinism as an inferior form of masculinity had its roots in the early Restoration. The cure was domesticity, to which the rake was brought through reformation, a process the fop as an essentially static character rejected.

The Polite Gentleman

The popularity of the rake with playwrights in the 1670s, most notably with Etherege and Wycherley, was partly due to the lack of alternatives. Shadwell, Durfey, Cibber, Vanbrugh and Steele (in his early comedies) struggled with the creation of an aristocratic male identity devoid of either aggression or effeminacy. In *The Richmond Heiress* by Durfey (1693), for example, Durfey apparently just gave up. The play ends with the heiress, Fulvia, soundly dismissing all her suitors as unworthy. It is also telling that plays ended so often with reformed rakes, and did not show how the reformed rake behaved after he rejected his old ways; Cibber's Young Worthy in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) is a good example of this, as Young Worthy at once rejects Loveless' libertinism but acts like a rake himself. Only in the early 18th century, playwrights were able to form a cohesive alternative to reformed rakes. Polite gentlemen who embodied the new most valued form of masculinity, the new hegemonic masculinity in the world of the comedy. Another figure which emerged was that of a blunt Englishman, who was portrayed as quintessentially English to counter the French connotations of the fop and the rake, and who rejected politeness as a foreign concept.

Politeness as a quintessential 18th-century concept was introduced in chapter 4 in relation to the fop and the connection between politeness, manners and refinement. However, the fop only

understood politeness, refinement and manners on a superficial level. Some fops might, if one analyses them closer in their relationship to politeness, be parodies of politeness itself. Politeness and refinement as they were envisioned by writers like Locke and Shaftesbury were much more than manners, however. The foundation of Locke's thoughts on politeness was a series of letters published as *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* in 1693. These were written for one specific young man, the son of a landowner, and were thus immediately concerned with the education of aristocratic men. However, Locke's guide went beyond established conduct literature. "At the heart of Locke's thinking was the idea that advice on conduct was more than a list of dos and don'ts […]. Rather, education was intended to fashion a moral character […]" (Carter 2001 53). Part of this moral character was founded on the study of Christian and humanist literature, imbuing young men with wisdom which Locke believed would ensure their appropriate behaviour in any social situation. It would also save young men from excesses, helping them to restrain their passions. Locke's work was popular throughout the 18th century (Carter 2001 54), indicating that this belief in education as a basis for politeness and morals found resonance. Steele and Addison in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* also provided more general advice and instruction on the personality of the polite man rather than precise instruction on manners (Carter 2001 60). Those qualities went deeper than what the fop could provide: "[g]ood manners and grace, beauty and attire were important, but speech and words were by far the most crucial in shaping a gentleman's courteous image" (Peltonen 2003 25, see also Carter 2001 62-64). The fop knew that conversation was important, but failed to be a wit because he lacked the intellectual capability. Conversation, then, was an important marker of a man's value, where the value of his masculinity could be revealed without resorting to violence (see chapter 6).

Politeness was not accepted as a suitable concept for hegemonic masculinity by all. Part of the debate was motivated by the politics of the day. Locke, Steele, Addison and the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury were all prominent Whigs, and thus their ideas of politeness were politically charged. If natural masculinity was, as apparently supposed, rough, brutal and ungracious, and maybe even indelicate, then wasn't politeness effeminate? Shaftesbury himself defended roughness in 1711 in his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times,* claiming that men's

> language and style, as well as our voice and person, should have something of that male-feature and natural roughness by which our sex is distinguished. And whatever politeness we may pretend to, 'tis more a disfigurement than any real refinement of discourse to render it thus delicate. (Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, 1999 233)

"Disfigurement" is a remarkably strong word choice. But Shaftesbury was not the only one who considered politeness to add little value to men and to have the potential of disfiguring masculinity (Cohen 1999 53). Two such rough characters were named Manly: Manly in Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer*

(1676) and Manly in Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728). However, while such characters were accepted as manly, politeness and civility remained dominant throughout the period. Politeness required education, education that only the aristocracy had the time and the money for. Politeness was a marker of class and thus connected specifically to aristocratic masculinity. By connecting politeness to hegemony, the continued claim of the aristocracy to rule the country was reaffirmed. Libertinism could be aped by servants (see chapter 4), politeness could not.

The rise of politeness and the Reformation of Manners were developments that started in London and spread to provincial towns, but were essentially urban. The countryside was still largely organised along feudal traditions which had lost their legitimacy in more recent ideological developments (McKeon 1995 295). A typical character in Restoration and early 18th-century comedy was the bumbling, ridiculous country gentleman. This character was mostly used for comic relief and was reminiscent of the Renaissance clowns. Unlike the clown, however, he was equal in status with the play's protagonists and often even related to them. His behaviour, on the other hand, was more in line with that of lower class characters. The country gentleman blustered in the same comical rural accent as his servants, unlike his peers, and generally failed entirely to accomplish what he set out to do. He was a satire on outdated concepts of patriarchy and masculinity; these gentlemen tried to use crude and brutal methods to keep their family in check and felt entirely justified to force their wife and children to comply with their plans and desires. In chapter 6, domestic violence was already discussed as methods which were not considered to be in line with hegemonic masculinity and which reflected badly on a man who had to resort to violence against women and subordinates. Country gentlemen were emasculated in the comedies. Their lack of masculinity was not the same as the excessively refined fop's, but by their irrationality and essential weakness, they are occasionally likened to women. In Cibber's (and Vanbrugh's) *The Provoked Husband* (1728), Sir Francis Wronghead's servant John Moody exclaims "Ah, weast heart, were measter but hawf the mon that I am" (I.581-582); John Moody implies that, although Sir Francis's words are full of authority, he cannot follow his words with deeds, while John Moody is well able to control his wife. John's wife has remained behind in the country on her husband's order, while Sir Francis could not stop his wife and the two oldest children from coming to London with him. Another example is Sir Tunbelly in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), who locks his daughter Hoyden in a tower and guards his house like a castle to prevent her from losing her virginity or marrying someone he did not choose. Of course, Young Fashion, the younger brother of the designated groom, manages to steal the heiress from under her father's nose.

The polite gentleman's ostentatious shunning of characteristically male behaviour and pastimes, such as fighting (duelling), pursuing affairs, drinking excessively and gambling, made him vulnerable to being accused of effeminacy, especially as he was also generally associated with the domestic ideal and

preferred to spend his time at home, often with his wife. Playwrights such as Cibber and Steele were actively engaged in presenting politeness and the polite gentleman as the answer to the problems caused by the extravagancies of libertinism and effeminacy. Some of the strategies they employed were already elaborated upon in the previous two chapters; through the negative portrayal of the rake and the effeminate fop, the polite gentleman emerged as the most positive figure in the play. In Cibber's *The Provoked Husband* (1728) both the polite gentleman Lord Townly and the country gentleman Sir Francis are framed as effeminate at the beginning of the play. Lord Townly has married a foolish woman he cannot control and whom he allows to ride roughshod over his wishes, while Sir Francis's wife is in (very incompetent) control of the family. However, there is an essential difference between these two characters. Lord Townly eventually manages to subdue his wife, while Sir Francis needs his cousin Manly's help to save his family from ruin. There were other wife reform comedies, such as Steele's *The Tender Husband* (1705) or Cibber's *The Lady's Last Stake* (1707), which revolved around the superior ability of polite gentlemen to subdue their unruly wives. Rakes (and fops) were of course disinterested in such matters and when a rake tried to control his wife, it was by violent means such as Pinchwife in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) or Sir John Brute in Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (1697). Polite gentlemen were able to prove their masculinity by being effective heads of their household (or learning how to become one) and superior to their wives. They had all the intellectual capability of the rake-hero and his ability to plot, but they used it to gain control rather than to satisfy their desires and in the world of Steele and Cibber, polite gentlemen were performing hegemonic masculinity.

Appendix: List of Plays Used

I could not find modern editions of some plays. Wherever that was the case, I used the first published edition. After the Restoration it became normal for plays to be published shortly after their first performance (Hughes 1996 3), so the texts may be assumed to be fairly reliable.

1660-1669

Sir Robert Howard, *The Committee,* 1662.

James Howard, *The English Monsieur*, 1663.

George Etherege, *The Comical Revenge; or, Love in a Tub,* 1664.

Thomas Shadwell, *The Sullen Lovers,* 1668.

1670-1679

John Dryden, *Marriage à la Mode,* 1671.

William Wycherley, *Love in a Wood; or St. James's Park*, 1671.

John Arrowsmith, *The Reformati*on, 1673.

Edward Ravenscroft, *The Careless Lovers,* 1673.

William Wycherley, *The Gentleman Dancing Master*, 1673.

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife,* 1675.

Thomas Shadwell, *The Libertine,* 1675.

George Etherege, *The Man of Mode or, Sir Fopling Flutter,* 1676.

William Wycherley, *The Plain Dealer,* 1676.

Aphra Behn, *The Town Fop*, 1676.

Aphra Behn, *The Rover,* 1677.

John Smith, *Cytherea*, 1677.

Thomas Durfey, *A Fond Husband; or, The Plotting Sisters,* 1677.

Thomas Otway, *Friendship in Fashion,* 1678.

Aphra Behn, *Sir Patient Fancy*, 1678.

1680-1689

Edward Ravenscroft, *The London Cuckolds,* 1681.

Aphra Behn, *The Roundheads*, 1681.

Nathaniel Lee, *The Princess of Cleve*, 1682.

John Crowne, *City Politiques,* 1683 (banned 1682).

John Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice; or, It Cannot Be*, 1685.

Aphra Behn, *The Lucky Chance,* 1685.

Thomas Shadwell, *The Squire of Alsatia*, 1688.

1690-1699

Thomas Southerne, *Sir Anthony Love; or, The Rambling Lady,* 1690.

Thomas Shadwell, *The Scowrers*, 1691.

Thomas Southerne, *The Wives Excuse; or, Cuckolds Make Themselves*, 1692.

Thomas Durfey, *The Richmond Heiress,* 1693.

John Crowne, *The Married Beau*, 1694.

William Congreve, *Love for Love,* 1695.

Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift,* 1696.

John Vanbrugh, *The Relapse*, 1696.

John Harris, *The City Bride*, 1696.

John Vanbrugh, *The Provoked Wife,* 1697.

George Farquhar, *The Constant Couple,* 1699.

1700-1709

William Congreve, *The Way of the World*, 1700.

Mary Pix, *The Beau Defeated; or, The Lucky Younger Brother,* 1700.

Catharine Trotter, *Love at a Loss; or, Most Votes Carry It,* 1700.

Colley Cibber, *Love Makes a Man*, 1700.

Richard Steele, *The Funeral,* 1701.

Anonymous, *The Gentleman Cully,* 1702.

William Burnaby, *The Modish Husband,* 1702.

Thomas Baker, *Tunbridge Walks, or the Yeoman of Kent,* 1703.

Colley Cibber, *The Careless Husband,* 1704.

Richard Steele, *The Tender Husband,* 1705.

George Farquhar, *The Recruiting Officer,* 1706.

Colley Cibber, *The Lady's Last Stake,* 1707.

George Farquhar, *The Beaux Stratagem,* 1707.

Susanna Centlivre, *The Busie Body* 1709.

1710-1719

Charles Johnson, *The Generous Husband*, 1711.

Charles Johnson, *The Wife's Relief,* 1712.

Christopher Bullock, *Woman is a Riddle*, 1716.

Charles Johnson, *The Masquerade,* 1719.

1720-1729

Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers,* 1722.

Colley Cibber, *The Provoked Husband,* 1728.

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